

Jewish and Middle Eastern Feminism
Telegeography • Sex Zines • Useful Plants

No. 75 Summer 1992

\$6.75 (\$7.50 Canadian)



WHOLE EARTH REVIEW

ACCESS TO TOOLS & IDEAS

Egg Sex
Twisted Sisters
Tantamount Reading

Fax Americana
African Wedding
Invisible Literature

MUTUAL HYPNOSIS



J.W.



PEOPLE ASK WHAT the "theme" of the next issue is going to be.

Sometimes there is indeed a theme, like "helping nature heal" or "questioning technology." Most of the time, the diversity of the articles is the theme. The cover of an issue can make it look like a theme issue when it is really a mixture, an ensemble, a mosaic—a compound lens instead of a spotlight. But it isn't easy to come up with a cover that simultaneously illustrates several themes, so we almost always choose one of them. The cover illustration of this issue is about "Mutual Hypnosis," one of a series of articles about research into the nature of empathy, creativity, spiritual awareness—new tools for thinking about old questions about human potential. But the first articles are about something very different: "Vigil" and "Under Siege" are about the way parents feel, and what they do, when catastrophic illness strikes their children.

"Invisible Literature" would be strange wherever you put it, so it fits that awkward transition from sick kids to states of consciousness. Jerod Pore is a new *WER* author, a scholar from the outlaw edges of technology, with an odd counterespionage tool of the info age.

Articles and reviews related to consciousness flow into material about ethnobotany, plant lore,



MUTUAL HYPNOSIS

COMMUNICATION alters consciousness, and altered states affect communication. What happens when you connect these variables together in a positive-feedback loop? Imagine for a moment a uniquely state-active way of communicating, and a state of consciousness uniquely sensitive to communication. —p. 28

UNDER SIEGE

For a parent, having a seriously ill child is the ninth ring of hell. It stinks; it burns; it's so noisy with shrieking you can't think. You feel the focus of all your energies slipping away, and the more you try to recapture it—or wish things were different—the more it evanesces. —p. 10

WEDDING IN CAMEROON

WE are not sophisticated jethoppers: that banana catalog sells nothing to fit us. We were not ordinary tourists, however, for we had come as recipients of an extraordinary privilege and opportunity: we were going to a wedding which would join our family with an African family, and with a whole tribe. —p. 84



RETURN OF THE PEYOTEROS

THE ceremonial use of psychoactive plants played a major role in the religious life of a great many Mesoamerican societies at the time of contact. The Spanish succeeded in eradicating the practice virtually everywhere they encountered it. Despite this persecution, the ritual use of entheogens did survive in the covert healing ceremonies of village shamans in a few locations in the highlands of Oaxaca, Mexico. The public ceremonial use of entheogens, however, faded. —p. 44

TELEGEOGRAPHY

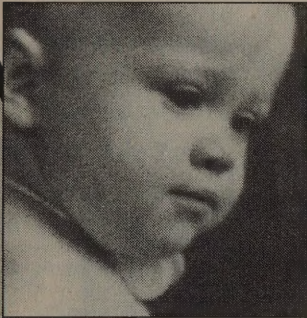
WHETHER a telephone is used to seal a marriage between New York and New Delhi, to confirm a line of credit between Seattle and Singapore, or to conduct an interview between Boston and Beijing, a new geography is being created—socially, economically, and politically.

But the telegeography of the 1990s does not resemble McLuhan's "global electronic village." The village metaphor suggests that the spread of telecom technologies has made people more equal and that the trend is universal. This is untrue. —p. 124

VIGIL

WOODS HOLE. Midnight. I am sitting in the dark of my daughter's room. Her monitor lights blink at me. The lights used to blink too brightly so I covered them with bits of bandage adhesive and now they flash faintly underneath, a persistent red and green. Lillie's heart and lungs.

Above the monitor is her portable suction unit. In the glow of the flashlight I'm writing by, it looks like the plastic guts of a science-class human model, the tubes coiled around the power supply, the reservoir, the pump.



Tina is upstairs trying to get some sleep. A baby monitor links our bedroom to Lillie's. It links our sleep to Lillie's too, and because our souls are linked to hers, we do not sleep well. —p. 4

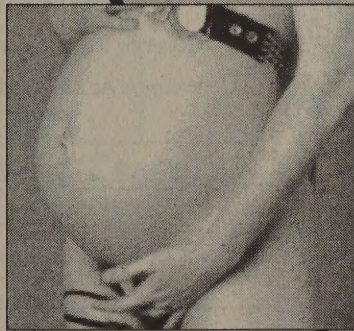
(SLAP SLAP) WAKE UP!

COMPASSION and empathy are emotions, and I agree with the Buddhists that these emotions are highly evolved, not primitive. With enough training in self-observation, we can develop a new kind of intelligence to bear on the world. Everyday life is quite an interesting place if you pay attention to it. —p. 34

EGG SEX

WHEN I was eight years old, my mother gave me a little pink book entitled *A Baby Is Born*. Inside, it described in great detail, with lots of close-ups and diagrams, exactly what a sperm and egg looked like, how they joined together, and subsequent portraits of the developing fetus.

How did the sperm meet the egg to begin with? The book said simply, "Mommy and Daddy love each other very much. They lie close together, and after performing intercourse, the sperm is on its way to fertilize the egg." There was no accompanying diagram, and it was probably my first earnest attempt to read between the lines of any piece of literature. I gleaned nothing. —p. 94



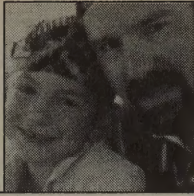
INVISIBLE LITERATURE

HEREWITH we shall inform you as to why it is in your best interest to fill out little postcards in the hope of getting free subscriptions to magazines with such fascinating titles as *Iron Age*, *Poultry Digest*, and *MAN: Manufacturing Application News*. You will be told of some of the uses for these periodicals, and you will be told how to receive them for a maximum cost of two stamps and your time. You will come to realize that your life has been empty and meaningless without *Digital News* and *BEEF*. —p. 20

and the cutting edge of alfalfa-sprout technology. Two surveys about Middle Eastern and Jewish feminism effect a radical change of course, leading to "Wedding in Cameroon," a family story. "Egg Sex" is a family story, too, in a different way: the ever-candid Susie Bright talks frankly about her sexual feelings during pregnancy. She is followed by "Dear Abby," passing along some of the best advice ever given for parents who need to talk with their children about sex in the nineties. "Tantamount Reading," Will Baker's story about a virtual dystopia, takes off at a technological tangent.

We were going to call this issue "Family Matters," linking together the parents and children in crisis, *Wedding in Cameroon*, *Egg Sex*, *Dear Abby*, *Sex Zines*, and J. Baldwin's eldercare reviews. But this "family" material isn't about "family" in the traditional sense, and it isn't really about nontraditional families. It's a radically eclectic sample of people, talking about the ways they cope with family issues today. Diversity is the riff this time. The theme of this issue is families, minds, plants, weddings, sex, future technology, ancient cultures, fax activism, telegeography. If this weren't *Whole Earth Review*, it would be a bunch of topics that don't belong

together. We hope it's an exercise in stretching your attention, from plant cordage to *Twisted Sisters*, from Albert Gore on the environment to Lilith myths, from wholistic language education to *Public Therapy Buses*. —Howard Rheingold



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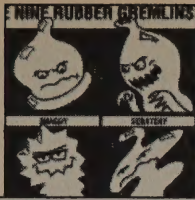
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Whole Earth Review, Issue No. 75 □ June 21, 1992 □ (ISSN 0749-5056) (USPS 077-150).
Published quarterly by POINT, a California nonprofit corporation. Editorial office: 27 Gate
Five Road, Sausalito, CA 94965; 415/332-1716. Subscriptions \$27 per year for individuals, \$35
per year for institutions; single copies \$7. Add \$6 per year for Canadian and foreign surface
mail; add \$12 per year for airmail anywhere. Second-class postage paid at Sausalito, California,
and at additional mailing offices. Claims for missing issues will not be honored later than six
months after publication. Back issues are available on microfilm and as xerographic reprints
from University Microfilms International, Serials Bid Coordinator, 300 Zeeb Road, Ann
Arbor, MI 48106. Most articles in *Whole Earth Review* are available online via Dialog, Mead
& BRS. *Whole Earth Review* is indexed by Access: The Supplementary Index to Periodicals,
Alternative Press Index, Magazine Index, Consumers Index, Humanities Index, Book
Review Index, Academic Index, and General Periodical Index.
Copyright © 1992 by POINT. All rights reserved. Subscription circulation: 23,490.
Newsstand circulation: 16,500.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Whole Earth Review*, P. O. Box 38, Sausalito,
CA 94966.



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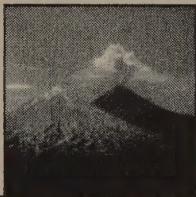
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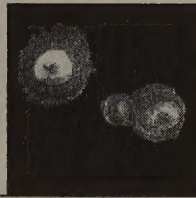
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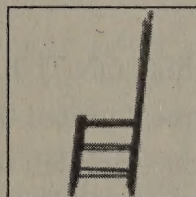
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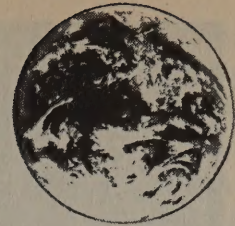
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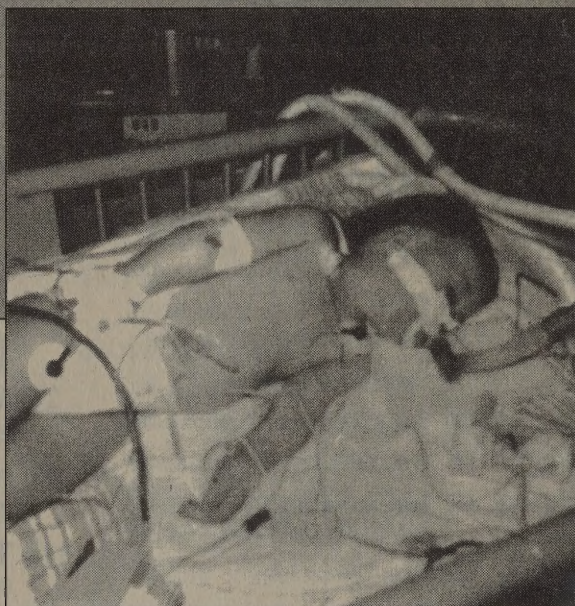
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This issue's strange and wonderful cover art is by Jim Woodring. His work also enlivens "Mutual Hypnosis" (p. 28) and "(Slap Slap) Wake Up!" (p. 34).

Mr. Woodring is responsible for the ecstatic, sinister, enigmatically titled *JIM* comicbooks. A *JIM* anthology, *The Book of JIM*, will be published this summer by Fantagraphics Books (7563 Lake City Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115). *Frank In The River*, by Woodring and Mark Martin, has just come out from Tundra Publishing Ltd. (\$4 postpaid; 320 Riverside Drive, Northampton, MA 01060).

For the full story on our back cover, see p. 38.

VIGIL



BY JAY ALLISON

AFTER I'D BEEN ON THE WELL for a few months, I visited the Archives Conference and left this message.

Topic 69: Early Impressions of the Well

#42: Jay Allison (jwa) Fri, Sep 15, '89 (09:16)

8 lines

My two-year-old daughter is caught up in a difficult health problem. I joined the WELL to talk about radio, but I found myself in the Parenting Conference late at night talking about Lillie. And little flashes of light came back — other parents, other people, responding. In my housebound state this felt like a lifeline. I am still struck by it. Moved. Changed.

Before this time, my computer screen had never been a place to go for solace. Far from it. But there it was. Those nights sitting up late with my daughter, I'd go to my computer, dial up the WELL, and ramble. I wrote about what was happening that night or that year. I didn't know anyone I was "talking" to. I had never laid eyes on them. At 3:00 AM my "real" friends were asleep, so I turned to this foreign, invisible community for support. The WELL was always awake.

Any difficulty is harder to bear in isolation. There is nothing to measure against, to lean against. Typing out my journal entries into the computer and over the phone lines, I found fellowship and comfort in this unlikely medium. The essay that follows is made from a collection of those postings on the WELL.

Woods Hole. Midnight. I am sitting in the dark of my daughter's room. Her monitor lights blink at me. The

lights used to blink too brightly so I covered them with bits of bandage adhesive and now they flash faintly underneath, a persistent red and green, Lillie's heart and lungs.

Above the monitor is her portable suction unit. In the glow of the flashlight I'm writing by, it looks like the plastic guts of a science-class human model, the tubes coiled around the power supply, the reservoir, the pump.

Tina is upstairs trying to get some sleep. A baby monitor links our bedroom to Lillie's. It links our sleep to Lillie's too, and because our souls are linked to hers, we do not sleep well.

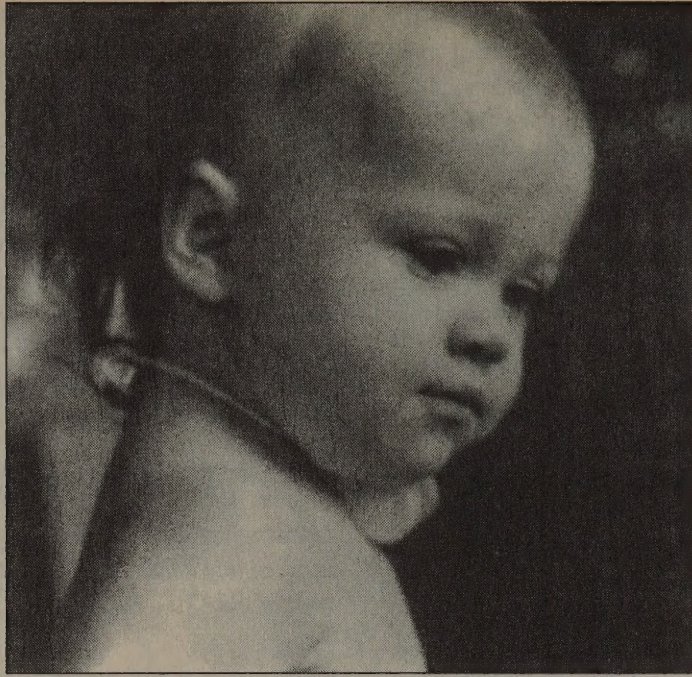
I am naked. My stomach is full of beer. The flashlight rests on it, and the beam rises and falls with my breath. My daughter breathes through a white plastic tube inserted into a hole in her throat. She's fourteen months old.

Lillie had croup — that haunting cough you never

We gave technophiles a swift kick in their assumptions a couple of issues back (WER #73), and we intend to continue publishing articles questioning attitudes toward technology. The idea is to take neither a pro- nor antitechnology stance, but to examine the uses and abuses of our tools, and to attempt to raise the level of dialogue about how technology ought to be used. The world, especially the world of technology, is far too complex for simplistic debates. The usefulness of pro- or antitechnology arguments diminishes when you get to the hard job of figuring out what to do with the technologies we have now, and to proposing what we might do about tools we can expect to be used in the future. New communication technologies — from voice mail to email, from fax to electronic bulletin boards — are not going to go away. Their uses and abuses are going to grow. Whether or not you have a computer and a modem, it pays to know something about the light sides and dark sides of computer-mediated communications, because these media will break out soon from the circles of the early adapters.

For those who wonder why people spend their time at such an enterprise as computer conferencing, Jay Allison gives us a glimpse at a land of heart in the universe of bits and bytes — the Parenting Conference on the WELL.

Jay, Tina, and Lillie Allison (who is healed and happy now) were joined by a new little member of the family, Walker Allison, on January 19. Jay, a radio producer, wrote "Hot Air: Tips for Citizen Storytellers" (WER #71). —Howard Rheingold



Lillie and her Swedish Nose, a vent that humidifies air coming into her trach tube.

forget once it jerks you awake in the night. She's our only child and we had never heard that sound before, the desperate barking intake, her tiny chest retracting with each gasp, sucking back toward her spine. We wrapped her up and went for help, and we didn't come back home for a month.

Lillie's croup was extraordinary, vicious, and almost killed her several times. After two days in our local hospital she was transported to Massachusetts General in Boston. They put a tube down her throat to her lungs and ventilated her — she was kept artificially paralyzed and sedated — but Lillie did not respond to the intubation. The croup would not loosen its hold on her airway and finally, after eight days, she had to be given a tracheostomy.

1:00 AM. I just suctioned sweet Lillie. I turned on the pump, dipped the catheter into her tracheostomy tube like a bee at a flower, and pulled the secretions out from her lungs. She's fiddling quietly now, lying on her back in the crib fingering her mother's undershirt that she sleeps with. I watch her by peeking over the bumpers and through the bars. Above her crib is a painting of a little Swedish girl sitting in a window watching the stars. My flashlight reflects off this page and illuminates the painting. Lillie watches the little girl in the dim light. I try to imagine what she is thinking.

At Mass General, in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, we joined a fellowship: the parents of sick children. You form bonds in the PICU, not that you ever say much to any of the other parents, but you bond nonetheless. The couple from Vermont with their one-lunged newborn, the parents of the burned boy, of the severely anemic infant, of the 12-year-old with cancer. We ride the elevators together quietly, knowing that we know some of the same things. Once I felt a hand on my back.

We understand each other with our eyes. All our eyes are hollow and we are pale, because no one sleeps. There is no day or night in Intensive Care; the windows are blocked up, covered over. We curl up on blue chairs in the parents' lounge and lie still. An unwatched TV tilts down from the wall, shining. Newspapers are scattered on the floor; cigarette butts rest in coffee cups and half-finished cans of Coke.

We walk down the hallway, past the pay-phones and the elevators, past the nurse's desk, and into the Unit to stand over our children in their nests of life support, and then back to the lounge. Just walking, back and forth, heads down, knowing we can do nothing, but doing it with a profound intensity. We do this day after day, week after week, wanting to be home.

In the hospital I do not think, "Why me?" or "Why

my daughter?" I think, "Why not? Why not my daughter?" I think about the virus, Lillie's heedless virus, simply wandering into her to do its hot work. The other children here were found by viruses too, or flames, or holes in frozen lakes, or tumors, or open windows on second stories. "Why children? Why anybody?"

Families come and go. Some of the parents go home alone. We watch them when their children die next to ours — ours unconscious, looking dead but not being so, precious life abiding. At moments during our ordeal, Lillie stopped getting air — she turned dusky, then blue — and at those moments when the doctors and nurses rushed around her, forcing us away from her side as they saved her, I glimpsed the terrain those other parents went into, but I know nothing of living in it.

4:35 AM. Lillie's having trouble sleeping tonight, like most nights. We've been dozing together off and on. She just coughed hard, a raspy wet cough, loud but voiceless, and the effort set off one of her alarms, a violent beeping like a smoke detector. I bent over to reset it and when I leaned back Lillie had her arm stretched through the crib bars toward me. Silently. I held her hand and we sat like that for a time. She started nursing again after the surgery; that's something Tina can do for her. I can sit with her.

As we prepare to leave the hospital, the nurses train us in emergency procedures and trach-maintenance skills. Tina and I fall to our tasks, never discussing the division of labor. I keep the pump cleaned and lubricated. Tina ties the trach ties. We both clean the stoma. We both suction. The other parents are learning their new skills at the same time. We are awkward at first, but soon we work around our children's wounds like craftspeople, offhand and expert.

Being home is different. We are alone, self-sufficient. You can tell the houses like ours, the houses where vigils are kept. Medical supply trucks

pull up and leave the necessities. We don't go out much. Our lights are on late.

4:45 AM. The flashlight makes its circle on the wall. The shadow of the pen twitches and crosses through the beam. The spiral binding of this notebook casts a shadow like a claw on my naked leg. Lillie frets. Her hands flap.

On the bureau is a Polaroid picture of Lillie lying unconscious in her hospital crib. We used to carry it with us when we were in Boston so we would have something to look at when we couldn't look at Lillie. Now it's lying on top of the bureau where it ended up; we don't know what to do with it.

"Please don't put your Cheerios in there!" Breakfast. Lillie is trying to fill her lungs with Cheerios by carefully placing them one by one into her Swedish Nose, the little cylindrical vent that fits over her trach tube. It's called a Swedish Nose because it was invented in Sweden and because it humidifies incoming air like her real nose, which she is not using. This cylinder makes Lillie look like a Saint Bernard. When we go for a walk, she sometimes takes it off and hands it to passers-by, or tosses it at them, depending upon her whim. And she likes to fill it with small things and put it back on; we didn't get a Christmas tree this year for that reason. Pine needles. You have to watch carefully.

Lillie in fine spirits, despite encumbering medical appliances.



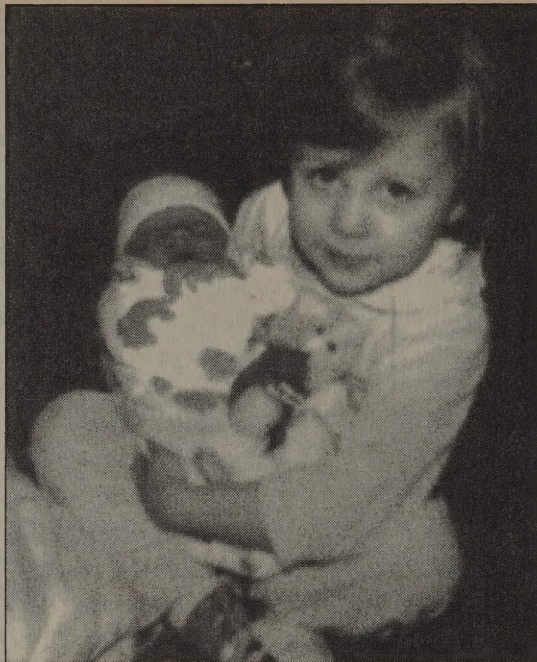
Lillie taught herself to vocalize with the trach. At the hospital they warned us she might not speak at all, but one evening as we were driving home from the grocery store, she squeaked and startled herself. In the front seat Tina and I cheered for her, and tried not to cry. Lillie began to practice. Now, in a rush, she gathers in her air and then expels it up past the tube in her trachea and out through her vocal chords. She is proud of her voice, which seems to come from both holes at once, a tiny human sound from her mouth and a mechanical one from the trach, together, in stereo, sweetly. If all goes well, the tube will be removed in the spring.

5:00 AM. I went upstairs to start the dishwasher, hoping it might help Lillie sleep. It's pulsating over our heads. Under us, the compressor we installed in the basement hisses wet air up through a hose to the mask over Lillie's tracheostomy. Now she coughs again. She's getting a cold. I drop saline solution into her trach to thin the mucous. I suction her again and sit back down to write.

This week, we had to perform an emergency trach change in the kitchen. It followed the curve that emergencies take when you've been expecting them and they finally come. A frozen moment of realizing, like a vacuum, and then the air comes back in faster and faster. Loud.

Lillie was wearing a shortened trach tube as an experiment to see if it would allow her to vocalize more. We had tied the strings extra tight around her neck so she couldn't pull it out. But she did. She was yanking off her Swedish Nose to play catch, but it stuck and the whole trach came sliding out with it, disconnecting her lungs from the air. She looked surprised and confused. Tina and I stayed calm; our hands went to her throat to coax the tube back in, but we couldn't get the right angle on it because of the tight strings. It jammed into the tissue around the hole, finding a false pocket. Blood bubbled and pooled in the stoma. In this moment, with the tube gone, Lillie's real voice returned. She made one long cry. Loud. Then silence, as her air left her and a ball-valve of granulation tissue blocked off her trachea, keeping her breath from coming back in.

Tina ran for scissors and a long trach — we had them taped up on the bedroom wall waiting for something like this to happen. I held on to Lillie. She had enough air left in her lungs for a wrench-



Lillie has healed; she talks now. For example, after Tina kicked Jay accidentally:

Jay: Ow.

Tina: Oh, sorry.

Lillie: Why are you sorry, Mommy?

Tina: I kicked Daddy without meaning to.

Lillie (brightening):

Oh! Can I kick him without meaning to?

ing cough. Blood sprayed out of her neck.

The kitchen is a cold winter blue. Lillie is clenched, terrified, still. Blood is drying already. New blood spreads onto her undershirt and makes a red necklace. I am stiff calm, muscles tight, supporting Lillie's quiet weight. My own blood rushes, loud. Lillie is turning blue. She begins to relax, an awful relaxation. Time rushes at a crawl.

Tina is back. She moves fast, cuts the ties, and the short trach falls away. She pushes the new tube in with determination, gently forcing it past the granulation tissue, and gets it through. Air pours toward the vacuum, and Lillie is breathing again. Her color comes back. We tie the ties, looser now. Lillie is in her mother's arms, holding on. It gets quiet. The

speed comes off the moment and time returns and moves at its pace again, slowly toward spring.

Almost dawn. Lillie sits up, crying. Squeaking. Small sounds. Her cold is bothering her. I pat her over and over, and untangle her from her hoses and tubes and wires, and lay her on her back again. "Peek-a-boo," she says with her lips. I crank up her yellow music-box duck and sit back down in the rocking chair.

The flashlight shines on my naked stomach. It's cold tonight. Quiet and clear. Stars. I am thinking: We will live in the woods, just under the crest of a ridge. By some boulders. The floor of the forest will be free of undergrowth, a matting of pine needles. There is a level spot there. And a perfectly formed cup in the earth, soft and out of the wind. My fire is there. My back rests on the gentle slope of the cup. The embers warm my feet. It is quiet. A spark lofts up to join the stars.

It's getting light outside. A faint gray light. Lillie is asleep. ☺

Closer to the Light

Pediatrician Melvin Morse published the first studies of childhood near-death experiences (NDEs) in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* five years ago. His papers were widely acclaimed. In *Closer to the Light*, he presents the detailed story of his work with children who came close to death.

Pediatric NDEs follow a similar pattern to those reported by adults: an out-of-body experience, often with elements that can later be verified objectively: a flight through a tunnel of light; meetings with "beings of light" who radiate love and compassion; and persisting, positive changes in attitude. (Children rarely reported meeting with people who had died before them.) Of some interest is the fact that children's NDEs occasionally involved elements of religious traditions they had not been exposed to by their families. Children with terminal illnesses also reported "pre-death visions," where they experienced meeting with a deity or spirit who helped them come to terms with their impending deaths.

Morse presents his findings with a mixture of objectivity and deep respect for his patients and their experiences. His research approach was thorough and methodologically correct; its cautious conclusions have set the stage for what may become important areas of medical and psychological inquiry and patient care. He also describes some research on the psychophysiology of NDEs, though some of his conclusions in these ancillary areas are necessarily incomplete. If you're looking for a definitive scientific answer to whether or not there is a "spirit" that survives death, you won't find it here. But the fact that children apparently have the ability to come to grips with death and dying is vital to understand, and the universal themes present in their encounters with death give us much to reflect on. —George Gleason

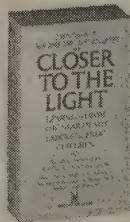
Our team of researchers began to examine Penfield's work. Buried in a forty-year-old textbook, we found clear reference to areas of the brain that, when electrically stimulated, produced out-of-body experiences. At times patients on his operating table would say, "I am leaving my body now," when he touched this area with an electric probe. Several reported saying, "I'm half in and half out."

The area he was "mapping" was the Sylvian fissure, an area in the right temporal lobe located just above the right ear. When he electrically stimulated the surrounding areas of the fissure, patients frequently had the experience of "seeing

God," hearing beautiful music, seeing dead friends and relatives, and even having a panoramic life review.

It isn't important for the medical establishment to accept near-death experiences as proof of a life beyond this one. It is important that they not dismiss them as deathbed fantasies or categorize them as bad dreams. They are real to the person who has them and should be used accordingly as a healing tool.

Does counseling about near-death experiences in terminally ill patients in hospitals or in hospices create a better environment for them? Do they require as many drugs? Does helping patients die in control and with dignity, including a deathbed scene in which they are coherent and not heavily sedated, heal the grief of surviving family members? Studies need to be done to find these answers.



Closer to the Light

Melvin Morse, 1990; 293 pp.

\$5.99 (\$7.99 postpaid) from Random House/Order Dept., 400 Hahn Road, Westminster, MD 21157; 800/733-3000 (or Whole Earth Access)

Another young patient was forced to have strict bedrest for rheumatic fever. She became severely depressed and refused to allow doctors to examine her or to draw the necessary blood samples.

Once again, "a kind and thoughtful person" did an unorthodox thing: He gave her a water pistol. Now, when the doctors and technicians came into the room, they had to be shot with water before they could stick her with a needle. Once again, control; the type that can only work when such powerful figures as doctors are willing to be shot with a stream of water.

Once we physicians start listening to patients and respecting and sharing with them, they will give us extra tools to help in the healing process.

In many ways, the physician is as poorly equipped to handle failure as the patient.

For instance, it is well documented that as patients get closer to death their doctors spend less time at their bedsides.

Time and motion studies in intensive care units show that as patients become sicker physicians spend more time performing procedures and much less time examining the patient or providing psychological comfort. Part of the reason that many doctors don't want to work with AIDS patients is the depressing fact that so far there is a zero rate of recovery from the disease.

In five years of residency training, I had only one lecture on death and dying that explained how to deal with the emotions and stresses that working with dying patients may generate. In that lecture, I was given an "excellent formula" with which to talk to parents about the events surrounding the death of a child to make sure that they understood that everything that should have been done was done. I was also told to explain that they might hear their child after he has died and that these "hallucinations" should resolve themselves in three to six weeks.

Many of my medical colleagues thought that near-death experiences shouldn't be dignified by scientific investigation. Quite frankly, many of them felt that the subject had received too much exposure in supermarket tabloids to be taken seriously by medical science. Anything reported in tabloid newspapers that ran such articles as "I Dated Bigfoot" could not be taken seriously, they reasoned.

I feel that medical science has tried to sweep the near-death experience under the carpet for other reasons. I think it raises the question of whether there is life after death, a question that defies the rigid objectivity hammered into us in medical school. It is easy to dismiss NDEs as "supernatural" or to put them into the same category as UFO sightings.

Sabom asked twenty-five medically savvy patients to make educated guesses about what happens when a doctor tries to get the heart started again. He wanted to compare the knowledge of "medically smart" patients with the out-of-body experiences of medically unsophisticated patients.

He found that twenty-three of the twenty-five in the control group made major mistakes in describing the resuscitation procedure. On the other hand, none of the near-death patients made mistakes in describing what went on in their own resuscitations. This presented very strong evidence that these people were actually outside their bodies and looking down as they said they were.

UNDER SIEGE



Pablo Picasso: A Retrospective

BY PHIL CATALFO

FOR A PARENT, HAVING A SERIOUSLY ILL CHILD is the ninth ring of hell. It stinks; it burns; it's so noisy with shrieking you can't think. You feel the focus of all your energies slipping away, and the more you try to recapture it — or wish things were different — the more it evanesces.

I don't pretend to know or appreciate the torment of parents whose children have died, may their lives be merciful forevermore and may I never join their number. But one part of me, the part that hates the fates for having allowed my child to contract a life-threatening illness, imagines this: that a parent whose child has suffered profoundly and finally succumbed to a deadly disease can eventually find some consolation in the knowledge that the beloved child's suffering, at least, has ended.

One couple I met whose young son died from a brain tumor, without minimizing their loss and grief, found a measure of peace in that very thought. A family enduring longterm treatment, often with the possibility of serious or debilitating side effects and an uncertain future on the other side, lives a life in the shadow of something fierce and malevolent, a life of compromised possibility, a life that has been taken out of your hands even while you must continue to live it.

But we all face an uncertain future; our lives are never firmly or solely in our own hands; and it is not given to us to judge fate, not if we hope to accomplish anything useful in our time here.

What is given to us is to learn that Hemingway was right when he defined courage as "grace under pressure": Anyone can perform well on a balmy day; it's at the precise moment when the hurricane is threatening to blow you off the face of the planet that you must act with utmost efficacy.

Unfortunately, there is no more training for this than there usually is forewarning. You might have

barely managed to keep a roof over your family's heads, to more or less keep bills paid and food in the pantry, and known how impossibly thin you were stretched just to accomplish that much. Now it's up to you to save your kid's life, and not just by grabbing his hand so he won't march out in front of a car. You must scrutinize as never before all his activities, what he's exposed to, what he eats; navigate through a sometimes bewildering array of procedures and medications; find a way to pay the shocking costs of medical care; stay on top of the logistical disruption of your family life; and still keep a roof on your house and food on the table (which means continuing to work as if nothing had happened). It's impossible, and you must do it, because you don't have a choice.

I COULD NEVER have imagined it beforehand, but when you can't concede to the impossible, it becomes possible.

When my son Gabriel (now 8) was diagnosed with acute lymphocytic leukemia (ALL), a cancer of the blood, a year and a half ago, I felt

like the protagonist in Philip K. Dick's novel *Flow My Tears, the Policeman Said*, who wakes up one morning to find himself completely outside his society, all traces of his identity and existence erased. I was completely estranged from the fabric of my life. That first night at the hospital, I couldn't accept this strange and ill-fitting but now profoundly central fact of our lives. Some days later I started a journal, and entered this account of my thinking process at the time:

Now we were here, high up in the hospital we'd driven past thousands of times (usually with the silent thought, "I hope never to see the inside of that place"), and there was no denying it. Our son's life is in danger and everyone else seems to know what to do but this is not okay I don't want this to happen nobody asked me first I wasn't ready for this you can't do this there's been some horrible mistake let us just go home now don't give me that here's-another-poor-family-who-just-found-out look I want out of this now I'm taking my wife and boy and going home NOW!

Except there was no taking them home. I would be going home alone. As Mich-

A child is a hostage to the world, and no parent goes for long without praying, in some way, for the health of a child. I knew Phil Catalfo and his family for years before Gabe got sick, and I was enthralled and shaken to the core by his day-by-day reports on the WELL. It was astonishing to watch him grapple with a parent's worst nightmare and come through it (at least thus far) as a knight in shining armor. If you ever have to face something like this, or if you know somebody who does, this article might be a crucial resource. —Howard Rheingold

Phil Catalfo is a freelance writer and extremely virile guy who lives with his family and retinue in Berkeley. He's a contributing editor for New Age Journal and a member of the Earthworks Group, creators of the "50 Simple Things" series. He has also contributed to WER and to Parenting magazines, among others. He founded and cohosts the Words conference on the WELL, where he has failed to answer any "Ask Philcat" questions for more than three years. —Phil Catalfo

elle pointed out, I needed to go home and take care of the other two kids. I got my jacket and kissed Michelle and Gabe goodnight. "This will be an adventure of healing and transformation," I told her — a hopeful and surprisingly confident benediction for us all, so we might be able to remember the light even as we plunged ahead into the dark.

The drive home was cold and quiet, except for my head. I have to tell the kids. I have to tell the neighbors. I have to tell the whole freaking world. My son has leukemia. My son has leukemia. I have to tell somebody. If I tell everybody, eventually I'll tell somebody who can undo this. Somebody who knows how to put it back the way it was. There's somebody out there who knows how to do that; I just have to find that person. Meanwhile, I have to tell people.

But it wasn't just a colossal misunderstanding, and there was no authoritative someone who could see that and send us all home to laugh off a big scare. When I awoke the next morning, it was, despite my fond hope, into a world in which my son, my vibrant boy, my baseball prodigy and nature mystic, my proud and volatile and handsome son, who has my Italian curls and birthmarks and more natural charisma and physical vigor than I could ever dream of — a world in which this boy I adore had leukemia.

That day my emotions imploded and my tears came, and after I had knelt, weeping, beside Gabe's bed — while he slept off the sedative he'd been given for the bone-marrow biopsy — calling upon the powers of the universe to heal him, I began to feel like I was no longer swimming in mud or walking as if I had been given a sedative myself. It was, I see now, a first step toward being able to live with this horrible reality, a bending before the hurricane.

FROM THAT POINT ON, a strangely wonderful thing happened: we

coped. Not always well, and sometimes not at all; and there are many uphill struggles that remain. But this is the good news amid the bad news: we have found it possible to live, and do the things we must. A family under siege is still a family. The emotional evisceration and grave doubt and paralyzing fear can be dealt with, in time, if we can be together, attending one another. Equally important, we can together take care of the nettlesome details which, left unattended, might capsize the whole affair.

In terms of coping with the disease itself, we relied on the doctors. Gabe is in the middle of a three-year course of chemotherapy, which, in recent years, has evidently cured some 75 percent of the children found (like Gabe) to have "average-risk" ALL. If he remains free of the disease for five years after treatment ends, the doctors will begin to feel comfortable pronouncing him cured.

His body has responded exceedingly well. After six months of especially intensive treatment, the protocol settled into a less intrusive routine, which continues for the balance of the treatment schedule. Most of his medication is taken orally. Compared to a year ago, his clinic visits are infrequent. He has not required any unplanned hospitalizations, not had any complications or unforeseen side effects. His blood counts are stable, his system deals with routine infections (colds, cuts) readily, and he leads an active life full of soccer and baseball and Cub Scouts.

In just about every other respect, we had to find our way. (Which, you know, was okay with me. If someone could take care of the monster attacking my boy from the inside, I could handle everything else without complaint.) For instance, dealing with medical bills, insurance claims, and other assorted paperwork can become a job in itself. But I learned to scrutinize

every form that came, because a simple error by a keyboard operator at the insurance company — entering the wrong code for a service rendered — could, if unchallenged, cost us thousands of dollars by incorrectly identifying the service as "not covered" by our plan.

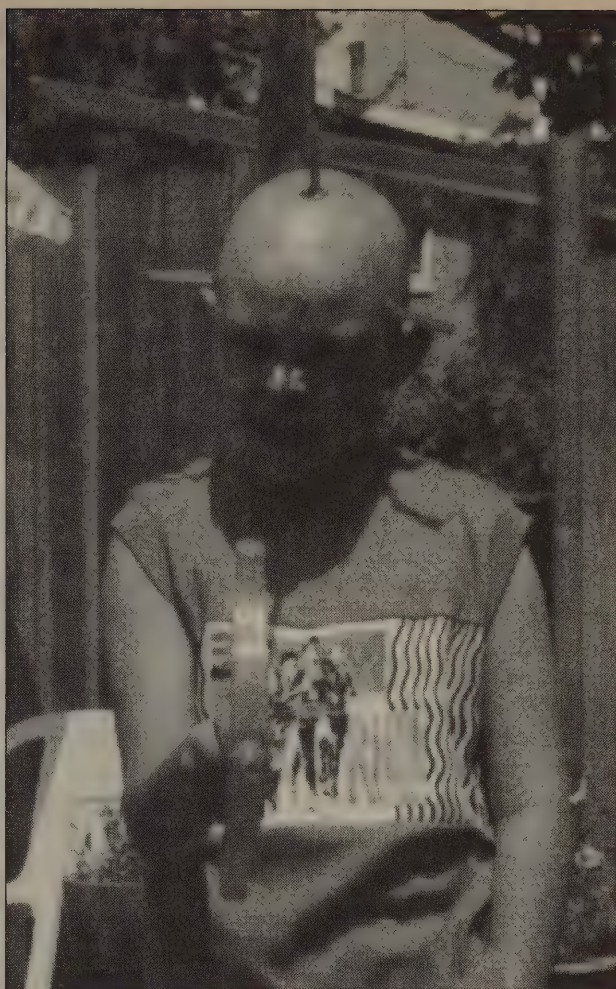
(While we're on the subject, could I just vent a little spleen about our health insurance system? I am grateful that we have insurance, believe me; in the first year of Gabe's treatment alone, the company paid out tens of thousands of dollars. But, because neither my wife or I have health insurance through an employer — I'm self-employed, she is a nurse working part-time at a local hospital — we have had to buy our own insurance. And the only coverage we could afford was the "high-deductible" kind, which, while comprehensive in terms of major medical coverage, leaves us having to scrape for several thousands to pay our share — about \$4,000 a year for Gabe alone, on top of the \$1,600 in annual premiums. This year our younger son Peter had routine, uneventful hernia surgery; that will set us back an almost equal amount. In any given year we could be responsible for as much as \$10,000 above the cost of the insurance itself — which rises steadily. The problem, as I see it, is not that we have to pay the money, but that the nature of the transaction between you and the insurance company is essentially a wager. You bet you'll get sick or hurt; they bet you won't. It's a fundamentally preposterous basis for creating a health-care system. If people get sick or injured, they should at least have the certainty that they will be able to find treatment without jeopardizing their financial viability. And they shouldn't have to feel like pariahs — blacklisted from future coverage by a "pre-existing condition" — as I fear Gabe will be when he reaches adulthood. Much has been made in this election year of the "health-insurance crisis," but the candidates,

as far as I can see, are pissing around the periphery of the issue — especially President Bush, who offered the most dismal, piddlyshit “plan” for dealing with the crisis. I’m not the first to say it, but health care is a right, not a privilege. Other nations consider us barbarians for not recognizing it. I could sleep at night, without fear for our national security, if we cancelled orders on SDI and those shiny Tridents and B-1s, and put the money instead into prenatal care, nutrition, environmental education and restoration, medical research, and universal health care. End of sermon.)

Another area where we had to act effectively, without benefit of briefing, was lobbying the hospital bureaucracy. Gabe gets his treatment at Children’s Hospital in Oakland, a merciful five minutes from our home. In many ways it’s an inspiring place (miracles and heroic acts happen there every day), staffed by brilliant, dedicated people. And no one has to tell me those people are lifesavers. Still, after the initial shock of the diagnosis began to wear off and we adjusted to the treatment regimen — and could analyze its particulars — we were able to see ourselves as customers, not just desperate supplicants. As a result, we pressed for more effective pain medication to be used in the clinic during the painful procedures these children often have to endure.

In the case of leukemia patients, for example, bone-marrow samples must be taken at certain intervals, to determine if they contain any cancerous cells; the samples are extracted above the buttocks, from a hip bone. More frequently, spinal taps are done, both to see if the central nervous system is free of the disease and to administer prophylactic chemotherapy. Although some medicos consider these procedures routine and not especially painful — and, to be fair, some patients (especially adults) withstand them with little or no complaint —

Gabe Catalfo, space alien from the Planet Chemo.



The Catalfo family

for most kids, Gabe among them, they are nightmarish. The only exception is when they’re sedated.

But the Hematology/Oncology clinic, shortstaffed and cramped, simply doesn’t have the capacity to administer general anaesthetics or even powerful sedatives; in order to do that, they would need an “acute care” setting, affording the ability to respond immediately if, say, an anesthetized patient stopped breathing. The inpatient Hem/Onc ward upstairs does have those facilities, and when Gabe had his first bone marrows and spinals (called “LPs,” for “lumbar punctures”) done there, he didn’t think much of them. After he had a few done in the clinic, without sufficient pain medication, he would dread their approach and furiously refuse to cooperate. One morning when we

had to leave for the clinic, he refused to go, and I had to carry him to the car.

This is not right, we thought; the kid is managing every aspect of his treatment and has adjusted to a situation no kid should be asked to face. Surely we can do better. So we asked one of the doctors about it, at a Hem/Onc parents’ support group he was addressing. He agreed that more ought to be done in that regard, and made the simple suggestion that we write a letter to the hospital CEO. A few days later we sent a carefully composed, logical, firm-but-courteous letter to the administrator urging the hospital to review its policies and revamp its physical plant if necessary, in order to minimize needless suffering on the part of these brave little beings who already suffer so much. We

sent a copy to the doctor who suggested the letter, and didn't expect a lot, since we were asking for a fairly substantial change in hospital practice. But both the CEO and the doctor quickly responded in writing, and in the following months we received copies of interdepartmental memos showing that the issue was indeed being addressed, by both the Hem/Onc and anaesthesiology departments.

As the year wore on, Gabe's LP schedule became relatively infre-

quent, and he managed to get through them better and better, so it became less pressing for us. Then, about six months after we sent the letter, at another support-group meeting, it was suggested to another parent with a complaint that a letter to the hospital would be the most effective way of getting his concerns dealt with. This prompted us, at the meeting's end, to ask the doctor what progress had been made on the pain-medication issue. "I was thinking of thanking you

publicly," he said. "That issue got to the top of a lot of people's agendas, throughout the whole hospital." New plans for remodeling the clinic and other departments, he noted, included acute-care facilities for outpatient procedures. "Your letter will help not only Gabe and the other kids in the clinic, but a lot of other kids as well," he said, calling the shift the swiftest, most dramatic response to a complaint he had seen in his dozen-plus years at the hospital.

HOW TO COPE: Checklist for Families

It's my earnest hope that the following will be the biggest waste of space *Whole Earth Review* has ever committed. But I know from sad experience that someone will need this advice, so I offer these tips in hopes of making things a little easier for that someone.

There are two levels of response here: the material and the nonmaterial. I take the second category first, because it is where the heart of our suffering lies.

Take it as it comes. The first days (and especially the first hours) after a diagnosis of life-threatening illness are suffused with shock and denial. You feel like an actor on the set of the wrong movie. I was physically and emotionally enervated for a day or two. Then I allowed myself to feel my own grief and fear — or I could no longer hold it back — and I reinhabited my own body, my own feelings. This was the beginning of my being able to respond.

Reach out. I've met parents who've gone months after their child was diagnosed with cancer without having any substantive discussions with friends, relatives, or anyone else in their world about the psycho-emotional impact of the illness on their lives. I can't imagine how they survive in such desperate isolation: when my son became ill I made everyone I met my psychothera-

pist of the moment. It's quite possible that trained help will be required to deal with the deep, complex emotional issues that arise. But in any case, it's important to feel free to share one's thoughts and feelings, both to unburden yourself and to receive the empathy and loving companionship of those who hurt to see you suffer. The same is true for everyone in your family: sick kids and their healthy siblings need emotional support no less than their worried parents.

You'll need to call upon your personal support network of relatives, friends, and neighbors in more mundane ways — for childcare, meals, transportation, the myriad everyday things that can seem impossible in the context of medical emergency. If you don't have such a network, start building one now: you won't earn any points for going it alone.

Pray. I can't tell you how to do it; I can't even explain how I do it. But I can tell you to do it. I've heard parents say that they trust in God, that their child is in God's hands, that God will heal their child. I don't dispute that, but I take a more moderate view. I believe prayer has helped my son, as it has helped me and my whole family

— and I see it as something to add to the complement of available tools, beginning with medical treatment. Even if it could be shown that prayer had no effect on medical outcomes (which would contradict what evidence there is on the subject), prayer puts you in touch with reservoirs of strength and will you probably didn't know you had. And the prayers of others can create an expanded community of concern whose love will support you ineffably but tangibly.

Turning to the more practical, "material" ways to respond:

Arm yourself with information. There are many sources of good information about the illness you're confronting; in fact, the profusion of literature can be daunting at first. Allow yourself some time to get a sense of the literature's scope — what doesn't seem clear at first reference will probably come together the second or third time around. The American Cancer Society, the Leukemia Society, and other organizations have scores of good books and pamphlets on specific diseases, chemotherapy, emotional repercussions, medical research, and so on;

I MAY SOMEDAY — if I can do it usefully, and if my family will allow it — write a book about the infinite ways in which so hellacious a threat to one you love so fiercely changes you, alters your daily life, teaches you. Already there have been a lifetime's worth of lessons about love, communication, courage, purposefulness, sacrifice, community, prayer, healing, darkness, fear, perseverance, and the tenuousness of this existence. I often think of this

continuing saga as an ongoing wake-up call. One thing being told your kid has a life-threatening illness does for you in a hurry is, it helps you figure out *right now* what's important and what's not.

It also helps you find what's inside you, what you can draw upon that you never knew you had, how to fight monsters and slay dragons and effectively defend your family and your life when everything's at

stake and you have nothing but your own intelligence and will going for you. I would like to be able to say I learned those things under more salutary circumstances, just by being enlightened, but I didn't. No matter. What matters is that we were able to learn how to do those things, strengthening our resolve and giving us comfort at a time when we couldn't get too much of either. ☺



A couple of Catalfo guys: Peter & Phil.

much of this literature is free (and may have been given to you at your hospital). The National Cancer Institute has a toll-free number for questions, and also provides a variety of helpful literature: 800/4-CANCER. The ACS offers a range of services to patients, from transportation to information on where to get a wig; their number is 800/ACS-2345. Beyond that, any good public library will have an encyclopedia, a card catalog, and a *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*; a medical library is even better. And, of course, the person to whom you can turn first and most should be your doctor.

Keep files on the bills and insurance claims. Accept the fact that you now have a new part-time job: dealing with the medical paperwork. Review your policy thoroughly, and don't hesitate to call the insurer with questions. (In fact, you should do that *before* a health crisis comes up.) Carefully read every piece of paper that comes in from the hospital, doctors, other providers, and insurance company.

Lobby. You may find, once you've settled into a treatment routine and you're dealing better with the fact of the illness, that you'd like to see some change made in a service or policy. Identify and express your needs clearly,

logically, respectfully, and with a reasonable, well-articulated vision of what you'd like to see. Talk with other parents to compare notes; talk with staff to raise the issue initially and see what might be possible informally. It may be necessary to write a formal letter to someone in a position of authority. It's best to control your emotions: if you initiate a discussion in a rage, the other party is likely to become defensive and not hear your complaint in any productive sense. We threw out the vitriolic language in the first draft, and took care to acknowledge the excellent care the hospital provides and our gratitude for it.

It's likely that you'll also need to work to develop relationships with the medical staff. You may find yourself dealing with a dozen different doctors, nurses and technicians; get to know their names and personalities, and get them to know yours. Find common ground. Express your thanks for routine excellence and special sensitivity. Bring flowers to the hospital for no reason.

Patients, families, and staff form a de facto community, and need to act like one. That means turning to each other for information, to process complaints or misunderstandings, and to find ways to carry out the demanding task which brought you together in the first place.

Listen. My Child Has A Lot Of Living To Do

This somber anthology formulates a vision of what truly foresighted care for seriously and terminally ill children, and their families, would look like. It is striking on several counts: 1) It is British; the experiences and insights it contains are told from the perspective of the British system, which assumes (for one thing) that everyone has an unquestionable right to health care. 2) The cold touch of death pervades the book, from the haunting poems of a girl who succumbed to cancer at 17, to the fact that several authors have themselves lost children, to the various pieces on bereavement and caring for dying children. 3) The scope is broad, covering a range of illnesses besides cancer (cystic fibrosis, congenital heart disease, children with AIDS) and taking into account the unique roles of doctors, hospice workers, home-care nurses, and family members — leading the reader to focus not on the disease itself, but on the thoroughness and coordination of response to it.

I don't know of an equivalent book for American families and the health-care professionals they rely on. If in fact there isn't one, there damn sure ought to be. —Phil Catalfo

■ CLIC [Cancer and Leukaemia in Childhood Trust] sponsors sessions in children's cancer clinics in Gloucester, Bristol, Bath, Taunton, Yeovil, Barnstaple, Exeter, Plymouth, and Truro.

We now have a team of nine domiciliary [home] care nurses, each of whom is linked to one of the cancer clinics. Since our first domiciliary care nurse was appointed four years ago, the benefits for individual families have been evident. Parents tell us how much of the strain is alleviated by having their own specialist care nurse always available on whom to call any time of the day or night; someone able to come into the home as a recognized and accepted member of the family; someone to liaise with the school, explaining what might or might not happen; and someone to maintain the relationship between the general practitioner and the patient receiving specialist treatment. CLIC funds a play therapist at the Bristol Children's Hospital and the secretary to the Malcolm Sargent Social Worker. We make personal grants in cases of extreme financial hardship and difficulty to individual families, always on recommendation from the relevant social worker.

■ Mercifully, malignant disease in children is not common. This does not help the general practitioner. It is most unusual for the general practitioner to make the diagnosis after seeing the child only once. Malignancy

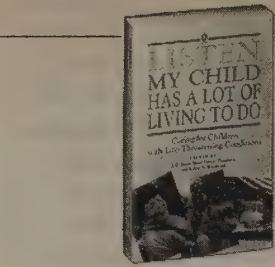
is not, nor should it be, the first thing that comes into a general practitioner's mind when he first sees a child with what might appear to be a minor complaint. Malignant disease can present in an enormous number of different ways — vague ill health, a niggling pain, a limp. I have heard many stories from parents who have taken their child to their general practitioner on several occasions when nothing seems to have been found, nor action taken. Sometimes several weeks, even months have passed before the diagnosis has been made. Sadly, when this happens the general practitioner is regarded as incompetent by the family. One hears the complaint, 'If only he had made the diagnosis sooner.' It is a difficult situation for the general practitioner and can put great strain on his relationship with the child and his family from the start. To prevent this happening there are, I believe, some fairly basic rules of practice.

1. Always be prepared to see a child.
2. If you are unable to find any abnormality after examination always tell the parents you cannot find anything, but are prepared to examine the child again if symptoms persist.
3. Always take seriously the mother who comes to the surgery [doctor's office] with her child and tells you that while she does

Holding Time

*Phoebe, my 13-year-old niece, got to go to South Africa last summer to visit a friend. A week into her absence, Cathy and Jeff, her parents, remarked in bemusement how peaceful it was in their house, how a mantle of tension had been lifted. Cathy was immediately stricken with re-morseful *deja vu* — she was repeating with her daughter what she had witnessed, growing up, between her mother and sister: relentless resentment and hostility, competition on every level, lots of tears and door-slammings.*

*The universe can be kind: within weeks, Cathy and Jeff had heard Martha Welch, a child psychiatrist, talk about techniques she had discovered working with autistic kids, and how she had applied them with "normal" children and their mothers. "How to eliminate conflict, temper tantrums and sibling rivalry and raise happy, loving, successful children" is the subtitle to **Holding Time**, Welch's manual of these techniques. Both Cathy and Phoebe have told me of the "miraculous" changes in their relationship, their family life, how they feel about themselves. Phoebe volunteers to help out around the house; when she is asked to do something*



Listen. My Child Has A Lot Of Living To Do

J. D. Baum, et al., Editors. 1990; 225 pp.

\$15.95 (\$17.95 postpaid) from Oxford University Press/Order Dept., 2001 Evans Road, Cary, NC 27513; 800/451-7556 (or Whole Earth Access)

not know what is wrong, she knows her child is not right.

4. Beware of telling a family categorically that there is nothing wrong with their child.
5. Note how often the child is seen. If after a few visits you have found nothing, consider asking a general practitioner colleague or a paediatrician to see the child. A new pair of eyes may spot something you have missed.

there's no resistance; she's sincerely solicitous toward her little brother, she's not afraid to talk to Jeff about her feelings when he gets mad. Cathy feels that maybe she's not a total failure as a mother after all and feels blessed by this seemingly new daughter who has entered her life.

Cut to next scene: 73-year-old woman holding 45-year-old woman on her lap, proof that it's never too late to do holding. I know they're there, the faded blue crepe-hooded eyes and the thin gray wisps framing the wrinkled face, but all I see is the most beautiful woman in the world, my mother. After Jeff told her about their experiences, she flew me East to give it a try. Being a Californian, from Berkeley, no less, I figured I could handle it, but it was my supposedly rigid, uptight East Coast mother who insisted each day that we do holding, despite my unexpected reluctance. I felt crowded; I remembered how much I hated her holding me when I was little — she was too bony and I was embarrassed and smothered by her bosoms; I didn't trust her when she said she loved me. But her eyes were there, her arms were around

The Whole Language Catalog

Metaphorically, "whole language" describes an educational ethos that, like language, develops in a social context, imparts meaning, and symbolizes experience. Fragmentation between person and process, individual and society, thinking and learning violate its principles.

This metaphor runs throughout *The Whole Language Catalog*, a powerhouse of a book that lives up to its educational principles. There are entries from all types of participants in the educational process, including class-room teachers, administrators, parents and children.

Recurring "running features" include parent perspectives on working to improve education; children's "marvelous inventions" as they work with oral and written language; teacher reflections on changes in their thinking and classroom practice; stories of adults becoming literate; articles about early leaders in the progressive education movement; descriptions of successful classroom demonstrations; profiles of exceptional teachers; and fundamental concepts of whole language.

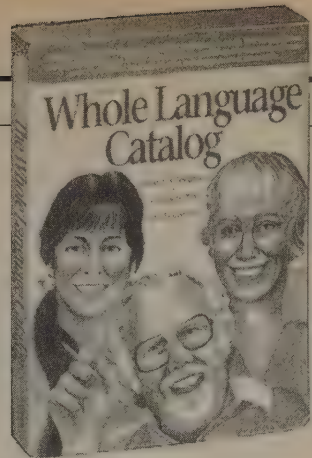
Good education equips one with tools that work in present and future contexts

for the individual and society. *The Whole Language Catalog* offers many useful ones for that purpose. —Betty Rapoport

- In defining themselves as mediators whole language teachers understand that less can be more. They realize that helping a learner solve a problem is better than giving him or her an algorithm or a solution.

- I wonder if creative thinkers like Andy invented the way *encalubm*A is presented on emergency vehicles or the way signs are written on streets for drivers to read as they approach intersections. Regardless, what is important is that Andy is not writing backward because he has a perceptual or cognitive deficit. In fact, the opposite is true. Andy is using his developing perceptual and cognitive strategies to make sense of the graphic information of the world and to work out concepts of directionality.

- Through parent-teacher dialogue journals I hope to create the kind of ongoing communication I had with Cathi and Harry on the softball field. I plan to send composition books home on the very first day of school with a letter summarizing my philosophy of how children learn. I will invite the parents to write back to me, and to question or



The Whole Language Catalog

Kenneth S. Goodman, Lois B. Bird, Yetta M. Goodman, Editors. 1991; 446 pp. **\$34.95** (\$37.75 postpaid) from American School Publishers, 1221 Farmers Lane/Suite C, Santa Rosa, CA 95405; 800/882-2502

comment on my educational philosophy. I will also encourage them to write about anything they choose.

Will the parents write? I'm sure that some will and some won't. I hope that the journals will open the door of communication for working parents whom I don't see outside the classroom door when I say goodbye to the kids, and for parents who might be shy about speaking to me in person.

me and wouldn't let go. The tears came, and came, and came. When they stopped, she was still there. It was such a huge relief to love her. She said it was enormously helpful having directions for something to do, instead of floundering around in a morass of impotent insecurity and rejection. For a few moments, we both experienced unconditional love.

In psychological theory, holding time has to do with bonding and attachment. In real life, it has to do with healing wounded families, from little owies to major ruptures. The book has lots of anecdotes and answers to frequently asked questions. You'll see yourself and your child there, and you'll know in your heart it's holding time. —Sarah Satterlee

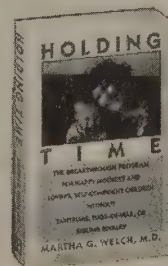
- Let me take a moment now to describe just how this technique is used. The child is held in a position that allows the parent to make direct eye contact while controlling the child's attempts to protest, to struggle, and to escape. The technique anticipates and indeed facilitates confrontation so that problems can be resolved. I have found that the responses of parent and child in *holding* usually go through a specific sequence:

1. Confrontation
2. Rejection
3. Resolution

The mother sits in a comfortable place with her child straddling her lap, face-to-face, maximizing their awareness of each other. The child's legs are wrapped around her waist. His arms, under hers, are around her back.

The child may protest at once, or there may be several minutes of happy interchange. As the child's own emotions are aroused, the child struggles to turn away. The mother expresses verbally her feelings — concerns, frustrations, hope, anger, as well as affection and love — to the child. She uses her strength and tenacity to intensify the contact and prevent withdrawal. The struggle becomes desperate for both, and then, if the mother perseveres throughout the child's rejection, it dissolves into tender intimacy with intense eye contact, exploratory touching usually of the mother's face, and gentle conversation highly gratifying to both mother and child. As the sessions are repeated, increasingly secure attachment grows between them and serves as a foundation for growth in other areas of the child's overall development. The effect on the mother is also profound. Her self-

esteem grows, and her capacity to cope increases. Most important, her enjoyment of her child reaches higher levels. The increase in the child's well-being in turn affects the father, whose support and active participation can greatly strengthen the results.



Holding Time

Martha Welch, 1989; 254 pp.

\$8.95 (\$11.95 postpaid) from Simon & Schuster, 200 Old Tappan Road, Old Tappan, NJ 07675; 201/767-5937 (or Whole Earth Access)

Elder Care

A lot of us are (or soon will be) responsible for long-term care of people too old to care for themselves. For that matter, unless Ponce de Leon comes through soon, we'll likely be on the receiving end of long-term care ourselves someday. This typically excellent Nolo Press book discusses the options in fine practical and legal detail. You'll learn how to plan estates and protect assets; how to choose a nursing home or set up your place for home care. The book is especially useful for dealing with the shameful tangle of Medicare and Medicaid laws and procedures produced by a government (and the society it represents) attempting to dodge responsibility. There's not a better guide available.

—J. (cackle, wheeze) Baldwin

- **Daily skilled nursing care or therapy:** Medicare pays only for the skilled nursing care or rehabilitative therapy you need and receive every day. If you receive such care intermittently, you do not qualify for Medicare coverage because you fail to meet this requirement.

- **Life Care Facilities**

The premise of life care facilities, also called continuing care or multilevel residential communities, is an excellent one: they are residential complexes that provide all levels of personal and medical services, so that it should not become necessary to move to another facility.

Unfortunately, the reality is not so great. Residents must pay a large entrance fee (\$50,000 for a small studio; up to \$200,000 or more for a two-bedroom apartment), plus large monthly fees (\$500 to \$2,000 or more) without any guarantees about the facility's continuing financial stability or quality of care. . . .

- **Warning**

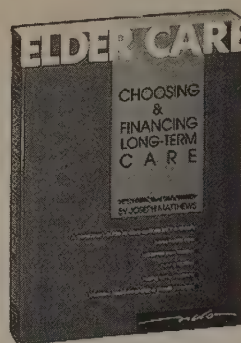
The terms of a life care contract are usually so complicated, and the investment so significant, that before buying it is strongly urged that you have a business adviser, lawyer or accountant review all documents, investigate the financial status and reputation of the facility and thoroughly explain the long-range implications to you.

- It may seem strange to think of divorce in connection with long-term care, but the unfortunate effect of the Medicaid income and assets limits has been to force more than a few couples to divorce for solely economic reasons. If all other methods for

transferring or otherwise protecting assets are unavailable, or the eligibility problem is with continuing income, you may at least want to consider the unpleasant alternative of divorce. Remember, though, that all that is required to change Medicaid status is the formal, legal divorce. A couple need not stop living together or in any other way change their relationship. In fact, no one has to be told about the divorce except Medicaid.

- By some estimates, three-fourths of all nursing home insurance policies require a hospital stay of at least three days, within 7 to 30 days prior to entering a nursing facility, to qualify for any coverage. And while many nursing facility admissions do come from the hospital, only a very small number of long-term residents do. In other words, the requirement of a prior hospital stay eliminates coverage for the very kind of care one most hopes to be covered: long-term care because of chronic illness, frailty, or physical or mental impairment, including Alzheimer's disease.

Some people who purchased these policies and later discovered the prior hospitalization rule have actually wound up pleading with doctors and hospitals — or having to



Elder Care

(Choosing & Financing Long-Term Care)

Joseph Matthews, 1990; 224 pp.

\$16.95 (\$20.95 postpaid) from Nolo Press, 950 Parker Street, Berkeley, CA 94710; 800/992-6656 (or Whole Earth Access)

exaggerate their conditions — to spend the required three days in the hospital. So, to avoid the sorry situations of being needlessly hospitalized or having a worthless policy, do not buy any policy that requires a prior hospital stay.

Easy Access to National Parks

Can fragile seniors, little kids, folks on the mend, people with various disabilities, and the just plain lazy enjoy our national parks? The obvious answer is that they have access to some parts of some of them, but not all parts of all of them. This book is all what-parts-of-which-parks, lovingly detailed right down to where the benches are. Even better, the experienced authors (Ms. Roth rides a wheelchair) inspire readers to greater things; they've presented the information in an interesting, enthusiastically friendly travelogue manner intended to get you out of the house and into the park. Sierra Club Books at their best. —J. Baldwin

- The area within 2 square miles of Old Faithful holds nearly a quarter of the geysers in the world, and we found this to be a haven for wheels, be they on wheelchairs, baby strollers, or even bicycles.

We first saw Old Faithful erupt at night after dinner. Each time we saw it blow, the interval, light, and steam were strikingly different. The park's world-famous feature is surrounded by a level, circular disconcertingly bumpy boardwalk (women using wheelchairs, wear your cross-my-hearts) with benches for resting and viewing.

Times for expected eruptions are posted in Old Faithful Inn and Lodge as well as at the visitor center. The center is moderately accessible and has an information desk, a bookstore, and exhibits. The center presents an audiovisual program about the park in its theater, which is enterable but has no other provisions for people with disabilities. A pamphlet on the show is available. The public restrooms outside the center are moderately accessible. The most accessible restrooms in the vicinity are at Old Faithful Inn and Old Faithful Lodge. Each has unisex fully accessible facilities.

- **Carlsbad Caverns Visitor Center:** Fully accessible, with information desk, theater, cave-tour tickets, exhibits, bookstore, gift shop, restaurant, child's nursery, and dog kennel. Fully accessible restrooms.

- **Namakani Paio Campground:** Flat with moderately accessible sites and comfort stations. Lowered telephone.

- **Kamoamo Campground:** Flat with moderately accessible sites in grassy area; pit toilets with significant barriers.

- We were surprised at the accessibility of some of the prehistoric ruins in Chaco

Complete Guide to Health and Well-Being After 50

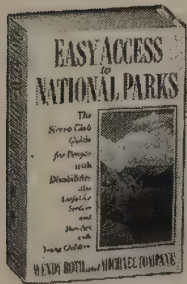
If it hasn't happened to you yet, I can tell you from experience that it most assuredly will — turning 50, that is. Here's an owner's manual for the half-century beast, be it male or female. Care & feeding, fending off the grim reaper in its various forms (I recommend ducking fast if you hear a scythe swish), what to expect and what to do or not do about it, resources, job-seeking, death and grief — most everything you need to know. It's all well-put, with no nonsense at all. —J. (Egad! You still here?) Baldwin

Memory Changes That Come With Age

Normal changes include:

- **Slowed thinking processes.** This may be particularly apparent when dealing with new problems or a problem requiring an immediate reaction.
- **Reduced attention span.** Many people find they have difficulty paying attention and ignoring distractions in the environment.
- **Decreased use of memory strategies.** Older people do not make as much use of associations and pictorial cues as younger people, even though they may have an increased need for such cues.

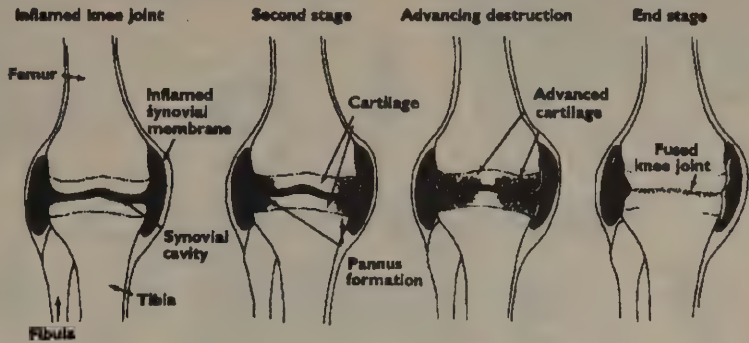
Canyon. We never expected to take a wheelchair along old stone walls, through plazas, and around kiva rims in a pueblo built one thousand years ago. Significant barriers block many of the ruins, but portions of five great houses are moderately accessible with assistance and provided us with insights into the Chaco phenomena.



Easy Access to National Parks

Wendy Roth and Michael Tompane, 1992; 352 pp.

\$16 (\$19 postpaid) from Sierra Club/Store Orders, 730 Polk Street, San Francisco, CA 94109; 415/923-5500 (or Whole Earth Access)



Progression of Rheumatoid Arthritis

Since rheumatoid arthritis is a systemic disease, it can produce symptoms throughout the body. In the early stages, people may feel tired, feverish or weak. Lack of appetite and weight loss are common. In addition to joint symptoms, a person may complain of inflamed eyes, pleurisy, generalized inflammation of heart muscle, blood vessels and other tissues.

- **Longer learning time.** This is especially true when an older person is confronted with new information.

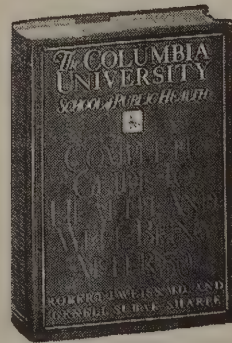
Areas of memory that do not normally change include:

- **Immediate or short-term memory.** For example, remembering the name of someone you were just introduced to.
- **World knowledge or semantic memory.** Familiar information such as who is President, your children's birthdays, how to get to the supermarket. World knowledge is actually likely to increase with age.
- **Susceptibility to interference.** Newly learned information in a specific area competes with original information, making it hard, for example, to break old habits. This characteristic is present in both old and young people.
- **Retaining well-learned information.** The old forget no faster than the young.
- **Searching for stored information.** Older people may take longer to come up with the information, but the search technique does not change with age. Searching occurs automatically as well as with conscious effort.

Obviously, the departure of children prompts a major change in a couple's own relationship. Unfortunately, divorce at this stage of life is all too common. A couple may be faced with the fact that they had little in common aside from their role as parents; when this ends, so does the marriage. For those couples who stayed together "for the children" or whose marriage has fundamental problems that were not dealt with while the children were in the home, it would be illogical to expect some magical transformation to the kind of

relationship they had as newlyweds before their children were born.

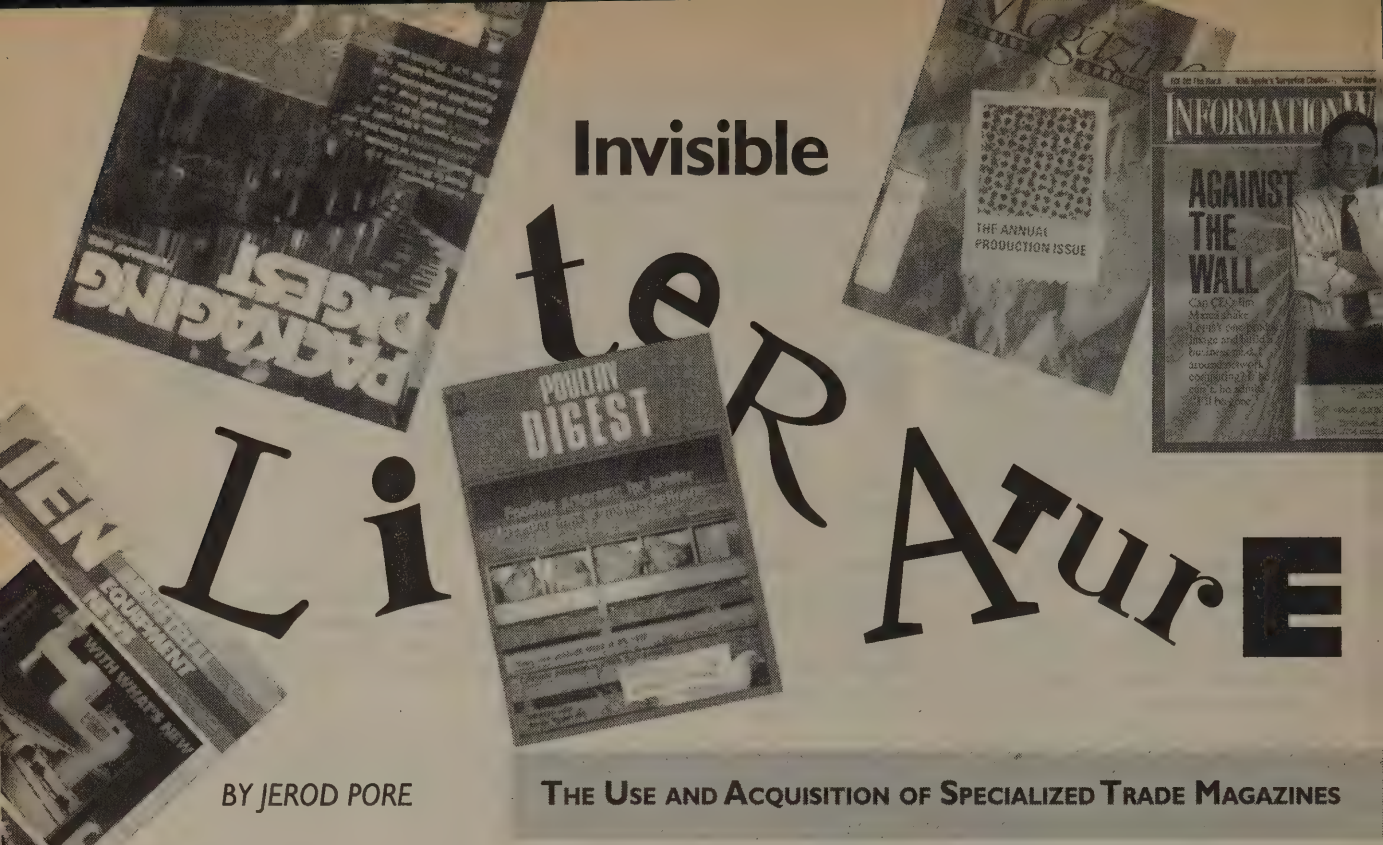
Returning to work or taking a job for the first time can be a matter of necessity, choice or a combination of both. In ever-growing numbers, women of all ages are reentering the work force. According to the 1980 U.S. Bureau of the Census report, 60 percent of women age 45 to 54 and 42 percent of those between 55 and 64 are employed outside the home.



The Columbia University School of Public Health Complete Guide to Health and Well-Being After 50

Robert J. Weiss and Genell Subak-Sharpe, 1988; 335 pp.

\$24.95 (\$26.95 postpaid) from Random House/Order Dept., 400 Hahn Road, Westminster, MD 21157; 800/733-3000 (or Whole Earth Access)



Invisible

Lit

ATURE

BY JEROD PORE

THE USE AND ACQUISITION OF SPECIALIZED TRADE MAGAZINES

Zines are one kind of invisible literature, bubbling up from America's creative shadow side. The large number of zines we get in the mail conveys a certain sense of the depth and frightening fecundity of the primordial cultural broth, teeming with mutant lifeforms, that exists beneath the surface of mass-mediated civilization. It isn't easy to stand out in the zine crowd, but "Poppin' Zits!" (WER #73, p. 121) drew my attention. Sex, death, mutation, technology, cultural anthropology, blenderized images, and rants that are either an excellent parody of the way a sociopath thinks before you read about him in the tabloids, or the real thing. Meet Jerod Pore, the publisher of "Poppin' Zits!," who programs large computers while in a trance state, and reads invisible magazines while wearing latex gloves.

Jerod's side of the story: "Am waiting for certain personnel to return from Texas before I can attempt reproduction of 'Poppin' Zits!' #9 (Lite) — 'It's simple — we force you to think this way.' Have broken two copiers already in attempts to bypass the censor mechanisms. Everyone who has seen the originals thinks I have gone too far this time."

If you want to penetrate the veils of professional specialization that surround the technologies of day-to-day life, you have to know how to find the invisible literature, high-tech culture's version of zines. —Howard Rheingold

0. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Herewith we shall inform you as to why it is in your best interest to fill out little postcards in the hope of getting free subscriptions to magazines with such fascinating titles as *Iron Age*, *Poultry Digest*, and *MAN: Manufacturing Application News*. You will be told of some of the uses for these periodicals, and you will be told how to receive them for a maximum cost of two stamps and your time. You will come to realize that your life has been empty and meaningless without *Digital News* and *BEEF*.

Often we will use the adjective "invisible," or the term "Invisible Literature" (a phrase lifted from J. G. Ballard), to describe magazines of very narrow scope with healthy offerings of obtuse jargon. "Vertical Publications" is the publishing term for "Invisible Literature." The publications are read by thousands, if not millions, of people, so why are they "invisible"? The reading usually takes place when the readers are in work mode, cloistered in cubicles or private offices. The subject matter rarely, if ever, comes up outside of the workplace, trade shows or conventions. The magazines are read and discarded, and 95 percent of the content is quickly forgotten. The members of one profession never see or pay attention to the magazines of another's job description; the existence of magazines for other professions might never occur to some people. The majority of the population, even the working population, is unaware of the existence of specialized trade magazines. Hence the "invisible" part. As for "literature," very few, if any, achieve the writing standards of *The Economist*. But "literature" is how you deconstruct it.

1. ART FODDER

This is probably the easiest use of Invisible Literature. The imagery and syntax of alien technology makes wonderful collage, cutup and audio material. Most of the images in "Poppin' Zits!" and "The Silicon Womb" are derived from invisible sources. Remember to follow Tom Jennings' rule: "If you understand the subject, the magazine is incredibly boring. If you don't understand the subject, the magazine is incredibly bizarre."

Other materials can be obtained for art projects by using the bingo cards (explained later) to get free samples. Imagine what one could do with test tubes, a drug testing kit, sound dampeners, personalized shrinkwrap and a handful of hi-test electronic components.

2. CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Knowing how to accomplish a task, and accomplishing that task well, are not enough to guarantee advancement within the corporate structure. One of the many other requirements of advancement is knowing how to speak and understand a language specific to your line of work. Evolved from the cants of medieval trade guilds, specialized office languages

define who is and who is not part of the "in" crowd. Speaking a modern cant also implies competence in and understanding of certain technologies, methodologies or systems. One speaks tax accounting as much as one practices it from nine to five.

Invisible literature is most helpful as a learning tool for one or more jargons. Ads and articles often use cutting-edge terminology, and if a phrase is relatively new the phrase will be explained. Some articles include glossaries. New words and phrases are often required for new technologies and methodologies, or for injecting the pretense of newness into a moribund how-and-why. Each issue of *Network Management* contains a most extensive glossary of acronyms. A couple of careful readings of *Network Management* will have you talking like you know everything about telecommunications.

Careful study of computer magazines allowed me to sound as if I knew more than I did when I was first seeking employment. I rattled off the buzzwords that I knew involving a "connectivity environment." In 1984 I had no idea what a "connectivity environment" was other than the vague concept of one big computer somehow sharing information

with several personal computers. I did not know how the sharing could be accomplished, if at all. Eventually I coordinated the monthly transmittal of data from Melbourne, Australia, to Sao Paulo, Brazil. "Systems Integration," the new and improved term, has become my specialty.

Managers especially like to learn from these magazines, and a great many of the magazines are geared toward management. Most management types come in two main flavors: those who went to school to become managers, and those who rose up through the ranks of the managed. Invisible periodicals will differentiate between, and cater to one flavor or the other. A good magazine for the professional manager, like *Modern Office Technology*, will explain, in the most basic terms possible, any and all technologies mentioned. *Plant Engineering*, on the other hand, explains none of the obscure terminology of pneumatic in-line indexing, but provides excruciating details on how to fill out demotion forms and how to have a work group meeting, and has a section of socially acceptable answers to questions about popular social problems like drugs and layoffs.

If you are already versed in a particu-

Knowing how to accomplish a task, and accomplishing that task well, are not enough to guarantee advancement within the corporate structure. One of the many other requirements of advancement is knowing how to speak and understand a language specific to your line of work.

How Digital Halftones Work

In photomechanical halftones, theoretically, each individual tone can be assigned a halftone dot size directly correspondent to the original intensity of the gray level. In digital halftoning techniques, there is a limit to the actual number of shades of gray that can be rendered.

The second difference in these two methods is in the relationship of shades of gray (halftone dot sizes representing the original tones) and the chosen screen frequency. In traditional halftoning there is no direct effect from one to the other. Theoretically, the potential number of shades of gray within a coarse screen is the same as within a finer screen. This is limited only by the film resolution, which is extremely high. In digital halftoning there is a direct and inverse relationship between the screen frequency and the number of shades of gray that can be rendered:

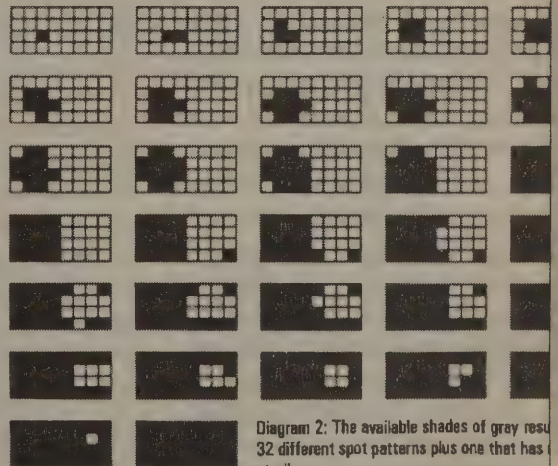
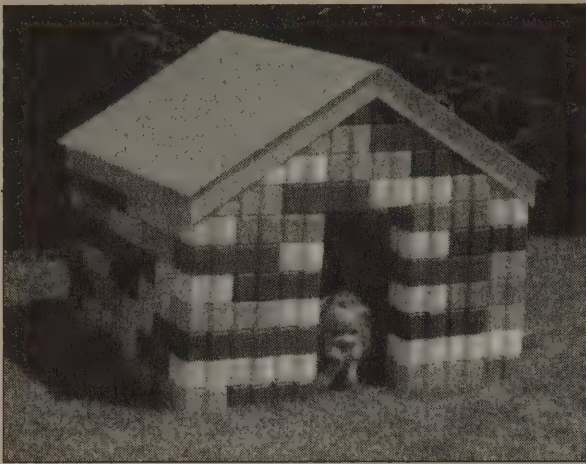


Diagram 2: The available shades of gray result from 32 different spot patterns plus one that has no dots at all.

Magazine Design & Production



Whimsical after-life: Used HDPE bottles in bright colors can later be used as building blocks.

For whatever reasons, the packaging and chemical types prefer to play up their own greenness. . . . Like the agribusiness zines, information is presented about which senators and representatives are being targeted about what bills. I would advise "serious" environmental organizations to obtain subscriptions to chemical, packaging and related industry publications.

lar technique that gets written up in a trade magazine as an elegant solution to some bleeding edge problem, it would be advantageous for you to photocopy the article, yellowily highlight the appropriate passages, and leave the copies on the desks of your superiors. Publication in a magazine gives an inordinate amount of credibility to an idea or technique.

A much-touted method of career advancement is networking. But how does one go about doing it? Amongst the piles of junk mail that result from subscribing to invisible magazines will be invitations to trade shows, seminars and the like, where there are boundless opportunities to swap business cards, as well as to pick up

even more magazines. The best place to network is the focus group. Not only are all the participants in the same line of work that you claim to be in, you get paid for being there. Technical focus groups pay \$75-200, plus food, for one or two hours of shooting the breeze about a product. I have participated in focus groups dealing with technology about which I know very little, if anything. The data collected could be used for any part of a product's cycle, from R&D to precision marketing. The marketing side has the vaguest of requirements, and it is marketing focus groups that let you BS your way through by reiterating key buzzwords and phrases picked up from the pages of invisible literature.

Focus-group invitations take the form of a low-level marketing type phoning you with some questions. These people know nothing about the technology to be focused, and will ask you leading "yes or no" questions or leading questions about how much of a certain type of technology you use on a scale of one to five. How they are able to quantify technology is beyond me. An invitation is assured if you answer "yes" and quantify your use at the second from the highest amount given. In their quest for extra-strength "hot buttons" and buzzwords you will be videotaped, but paid in cash.

3. POLITICAL INTELLIGENCE

Not the politics of the Replicratic Party, but the politics of economic equality, animal rights, illegal dumping of waste or product, hiring practices, congressional lobbying and funding. The State and Federal Houses are no longer the centers of political activities and power; the MegaCorporations have that dubious honor. The letter-writing campaign and vote drive have been replaced by the boycott. Salient information is to be found within the pages of invisible magazines.

And what are your favorite corporations up to? No good I imagine. But reading invisible literature can supply one with a great deal of data. The goal of invisible literature is to move advertised product. Besides outright advertising, the two main ways of getting out the goods are creating "news" stories about industry players, products or promoters, or creating "news" stories about users of the products who triumphed over the adversity of a fast-changing environment. Depending upon how reputedly the magazine wishes to be perceived, the stories are either contrived pieces glorifying the world-crisis-solving potential of the latest and greatest ball screws and sump pumps (written by the manufacturer's favored PR flack), or they are reasonably fair reports of a vendor's financial problems. The ratio of advertisement to information is probably the best indicator of editorial objectivity and balance. *Information Week* is high on the credibility scale with an ad-to-data ratio of under .5 to 1. Most anything put out by Gordon Publications bottoms out at 100 to 1.

Stories involving users of advertised products, or horror stories of non-advertised products, play to the egos of current and potential clients. This is a kind of lottery for the allotted fifteen minutes of fame. The subtext whispers sublimely, "Buy the product, make innovative use of it, get on the cover of this magazine."

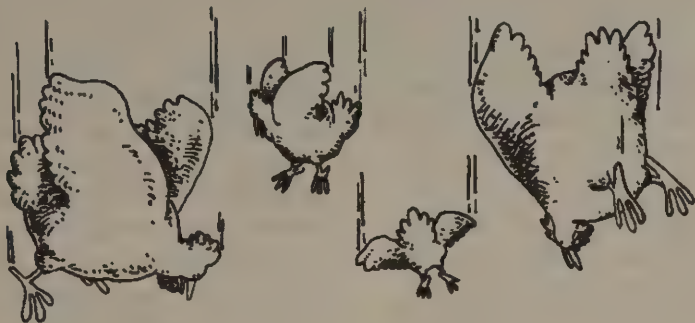
Other concerns are also reported by the magazines, but such concerns are almost always addressed by various User Groups or Trade Associations or other quasi-official organizations

with members who espouse one brand of product loyalty. The rantings of a Trade Association are often political in nature. Of the many I have tracked, the most vociferous

are the agribusiness associations. They whine endlessly about "animal rights extremists." Always those three words together, just like the "environmental terrorists," about whom they whine often. I have gathered information about which members of Congress they are targeting, who sponsors which bills to what end, and what sort of misleading statistics they are disseminating to get their point across. (Here are two popular, *Harper's*-style statistics. The combined annual budget of the fifteen largest animal-rights groups: \$140,000,000. The rank of animal rights as the subject of letters to Congress: 3.)

I'm sure taxes and abortion are the two more popular subjects of letters to Congress. Think about what the ALF could do with a cool million or two. In one attempt to sound fair and reasonable, a guest editorial from the President of the American Farm Bureau Federation let slip that the fabled \$140-million figure includes enforcement of "humane" laws and the spaying and neutering of pets; therefore one may conclude that the SPCA is an animal-rights extremist organization.

Not quite as vehement are the ravings of packaging and chemical magazines about the environmental movement. For whatever reasons, the packaging and chemical types prefer to play up their own greenness. Articles in *Packaging and Packaging Digest* enthusiastically herald the latest gabled carton made from a whopping ten percent of recycled materials with both post- and pre-consumer waste! Exxon and Dow take out multipage ads of glossy forests and endangered critters, espousing their corporate concern and care for The Environment. Like the agribusiness zines, information is presented about which senators and representatives are being targeted about what bills. I would advise "serious" environmental organizations to obtain subscriptions to chemical, packaging and related industry publications.



Feedstuffs

EVEN IF YOU THINK you understand the subject, you may find the invisible to be wonderfully incomprehensible, or too close to comprehensible in ways you're not sure you want to think about. Here are some examples:

Magazine	Quote
<i>Food Engineering</i>	"Eccentric weight vibrator needs no lubrication. The particles range in size from one to ten microns, giving the food a smooth mouthfeel with no detectable aftertaste or residual effect."
<i>BioMedical Products</i>	"Provides long-term access to body cavities reactive with monoclonal antibodies for the ED-A region, excreted into medium by human foreskin fibroblasts."
<i>Evaluation Engineering</i>	"Everything you wanted to know about vibration."
<i>Poultry Digest</i>	"Recycled chickens and turkeys make great poultry feed — if the recycled birds have been put through a pressure cooking process called extrusion."
<i>Broiler Industry</i>	"Proper stunning of broilers. Electrical tenderizing of carcasses."
<i>Business Month</i>	"A casual observer might not immediately see the connection between tampons and the national security of the United States."
<i>Lasers and Photonics</i>	"It is the intimate details of the melting of silicon and GaAs during such short times . . . the excitation of gases to highly excited states . . . and the high-resolution examination of liquid surfaces . . . that has captured the attention of the physics group at Harvard."
<i>Scientific Computing</i>	"Measuring Pain."

4. SYSTEMIC EXPLORATIONS

Invisible magazines provide a wealth of information to aid one in the exploration of systems, from telecommunications and computers to feed lots and supermarket layouts. If you are interested in a specific technology or methodology, then you should subscribe to every free magazine regarding that particular system. For magazines that are not free, trial issues are often available. You can decide if it is worth your money or, better yet, worth attempting to convince those who buy subscriptions at your place of employment of the need for those magazines.

System-specific magazines come in three varieties: those geared toward managers; those geared toward technicians; and those comprising nothing but advertisements and advertorials. Unless you're in the market for used equipment, the latter variety is useless. The second is the best, but the hard-core technical magazines are rarely free and often carry a cover price of ten to twenty-five dollars an

issue. The magazines targeting managers who came up through the ranks are the best sources of free information. Most managers of a technology were once technicians; as such they like to (or like to think they still) get their hands dirty. Invisible magazines cater to these whims with articles on how to exploit this feature or that product, what is required to adhere to the latest laws, and what to look out for when mixing and matching hardware from multiple vendors.

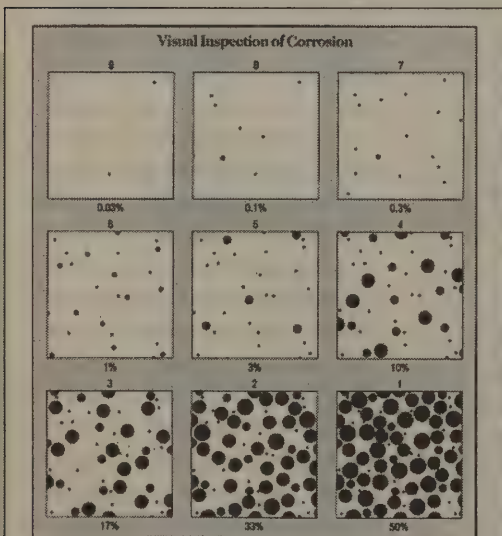
You'll find pictures and schematics to aid in identification of loopholes and weaknesses you may wish to exploit. They are lucky finds, to be sure, but some articles go right up to the point of saying, "Insert monkey wrench here for the most disastrous effect." A glaring security loophole was revealed to me in the pages of *Systems 3X-AS/400 World*, a free magazine. The same information was provided by IBM, but effectively hidden by being scattered across three of the forty-two manuals that came with the AS/400 on which I work.

5. ACQUISITION

And just how do you go about getting these free, yet sometimes valuable, magazines? The key to enlightenment is the Bingo Card, called such because of the array of numbers. The numbers are used by subscribers to further inundate themselves with junk mail. Brochures, sales calls, catalogs can be had by obeying the command at the bottom of a full-page advertisement, "For more information, circle No. 23." The numbers are also used to rate articles. Sometimes the reader service cards, as they are officially known, are only for more information; subscriptions may require completion of yet another card.

Before you fill out a bingo card, you must get one. Some fanzine editors trade or include bingo cards with our zines. Prisoners have formed a loose network of bingo-card exchanges. Invisible literature in jail has two purposes: to fend off boredom and to extract a modicum of vengeance upon the guards by making them haul very heavy sacks of mail, each tedious piece of which is subject to inspection. As there are many prisoner support groups, prisoners who take out pen-pal ads in tabloids, and prisoners who blindly write to small-press magazines begging for correspondence and free issues, it would not be hard to find somebody willing to trade bingo cards for post-cards. If you have a job in an office, or if you occasionally visit the office environment, you can probably find magazines; just ask to take a card.

If you do not deign to sully yourself with office work, your local library (if any are left) may have a copy of one of a few reference books that contain a list of "legitimate" magazines and newsletters in print. Three such publications are *Bacon's Publicity Checker*, *SRDS — American Standard Rate and Data Sheet* (a.k.a. "The Big Red Book"), and *Working Press of the Nation*. Each sorts the magazines into categories, and while each provides



Plant Engineering

Corrosion engineers recommend repainting rather than touchup if the appearance indicates rusting over 30% or more of the surface. The SSPC-Vis2 guide . . . should not be taken as a recommendation on repainting requirements.

Most managers of a technology were once technicians; as such they like to (or like to think they still) get their hands dirty. Invisible magazines cater to these whims with articles on how to exploit this feature or that product, what is required to adhere to the latest laws, and what to look out for when mixing and matching hardware from multiple vendors.

928215 DATAMATION

February 15, 1992
Good until August 15, 1992

Circle the numbers of products or advertisements
to which you want more information.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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NAME Please Print: _____
 TITLE _____
 COMPANY _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 COUNTRY _____ PHONE _____

Just how do you go about getting these free, yet sometimes valuable, magazines? The key to enlightenment is the Bingo Card, called such because of the array of numbers. The numbers are used by subscribers to further inundate themselves with junk mail.

1. BUSINESS CLASSIFICATION AT YOUR LOCATION

- 01 Manufacturing computers
- 02 Transportation & Utilities
- 03 Other Manufacturing/Shop
- 04 Government
- 05 Education
- 06 Computers & SP Services
- 07 Finance, Insurance
- 08 Trade, Wholesale/Retail
- 09 Medical & Legal Services
- 10 Other Services

2. TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE EMPLOYED BY COMPANY

- 11 10,000 and over
- 12 7,500-9,999
- 13 5,000-7,499
- 14 2,500-4,999
- 15 1,000-2,499
- 16 500-999
- 17 100-499
- 18 Under 100

928215 DATAMATION

NAME Please Print: _____
 TITLE _____

different information about publications, enough can be gleaned to determine if a magazine is free and the address to write to for a subscription card. If you have access to company letterhead, and can receive mail where you work, use the letterhead. If not, exploit the wonders of desktop forgery and create your own letterhead. Filing for a business name in California costs but a few dollars, if you wish to be more legitimate. (We use Cognitive Dissonance Communications.)

The very act of subscribing to invisible magazines will cause you to receive, amidst the unasked-for catalogs and brochures, subscription cards to other magazines. The more magazines a nonexistent company receives, the more real and legitimate that company becomes. The rule of thumb is: three subscriptions to magazines covering similar topics being delivered to the same person will generate at least two subscription cards a month until you reach some as-yet-unknown maximum. I've peaked at subscriptions to sixty different publications.

Filling out bingo cards is an outlaw craft of the info-age; one pays for invisible magazines in the currency of careful deception. One nice thing is, you can do it on company time as it looks like work. The amount of information required for a subscription varies from magazine to magazine. It

is necessary to tailor the information to the publication, which could be difficult if you have never seen a copy of it; however, the cards themselves should give you a good idea of what is required. The most important bits besides name, address and phone number (and yes, a phone number is a good idea; without one you would never get invited to a focus group) are title, equipment and purchasing authority. Often groups of titles are listed on the card, so select a management-type title. Unless you have fabricated a corporation, don't be the president, owner or CEO. Be MIS Manager for computer magazines, Production Manager for anything that looks or sounds manufacturing-related. You should have final or recommendation authority on purchases, and if the card asks for an annual budget select the category second or third from the biggest budget. The "second or third from the biggest" rule applies to all sections on the card with numbers, e.g. equipment budgets and number of employees.

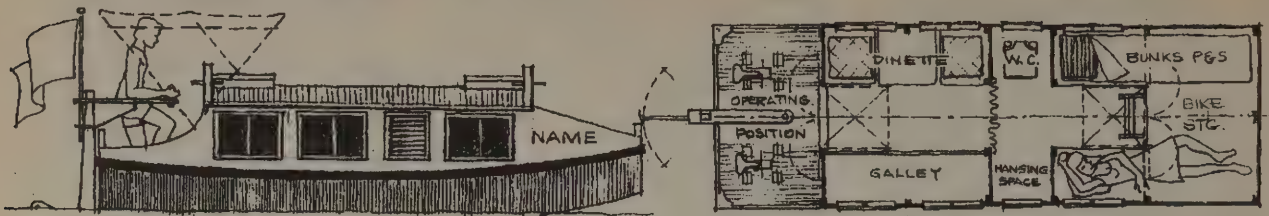
If you're too small you won't get a sub, and if you're too big (unless you work for GM) questions may be raised. Equipment is required for any product-specific magazine and should be obvious. If you wanted a subscription to *Chemical Week*, then your fabricated corporation should be running a line of petrochemical pro-

duction. If asked, plan on buying a couple of somethings in the next twelve months. If you have a copy of the magazine handy and the subscription card doubles as a bingo card, circle a couple of the numbers for intriguing-looking ads. I've found that requesting more product information substantially improves the processing time of a subscription request. Sales calls can always be fended off with "No, I requested information about another product." The fulfillment houses are notoriously inept when it comes to getting the right information to the requester.

Sign it, date it, mail it (many are postage-paid) and wait. About 80 percent go through the first time. Sometimes a second, more detailed form is required. If you don't get a magazine you want, keep trying. It took me three tries to get a subscription to *Pharmaceutical Processing* and it really wasn't worth it.

There are unwanted side effects to many subscriptions. Most invisible magazines are published on chemical-laden, glossy, unrecyclable paper. If you thought regular junk mail was bad, wait till you get on business junk-mail lists. Calls from sales types and market researchers will be a daily event. Your mail carrier or mailroom serf might come to hate you. You have been warned.

Escargot pedal-powered canal cruiser



A tempting idea, this snailboat. Her twin screws are turned by you and a friend, not pedaling too hard unless there is a nasty headwind or adverse current. That unless implies use limited to normally calm waters such as canals (there are still some around the US), inland waterways, modest lakes, slow rivers and the like. The claimed practical cruising speed of 4 mph is roughly comparable to that

of a loaded conventional open canoe, but unlike a canoe, there's no way you could portage the thing except on a boat trailer. Then again, like its eponym, your house comes along too, complete with twin bunks, galley, W.C. and plenty of storage, including room for a pair of folding bikes. Ten pages of plans with detailed instructions by the naval architect/designer assume you already have

tool competence. Too bad it isn't inflatable, so you could fly it as luggage to those wonderful canals in England and France! —J. Baldwin

Escargot Canal Cruiser

(Drawings and step-by-step instructions) Information free from Philip Thiel, Naval Architect, 4720 7th Avenue NE, Seattle, WA 98105

Long Haul Cargo Bicycle

Pedal-powered mini-pickup trucks are an old idea. There are many two- and three-wheeled models available around the world, but most examples are awkward, unsafe, difficult to ride, too heavy, and consequently very hard on their human "motors." Indeed, studies show that human powerplants so burdened tend to have short, unhappy lives; many literally die of broken hearts. Some cities in the Far East have banned them.

Bike transportation expert Jan Vander-Tuin has come up with a pedaled hauler that all but eliminates the problems afflicting its ilk, assuming that the boss doesn't counter with a new, equally heart-breaking schedule. It's a slim two-wheeler that doesn't dangerously hang out into faster auto traffic. The latest mountain-

bike technology abounds. I've ridden this thing — at first with wobbly trepidation, but only a minute or two later with unexpected agility and even hubris in dense pedestrian traffic. (OK, I'll admit to scattering a few craven peasants.) The Long Jan is remarkably easy to ride, whether empty or loaded to its 180-lb. capacity. I tested it with an understandably nervous and squimmy youth as the cargo, and still had no problems deftly avoiding potential plaintiffs. Jr. Hi-size kids can ride it with casual impunity; it's actually rather fun. In any venue of modest vertical contour, this well-designed machine makes a lot of sense. Available built to various specifications, and priced (fairly) accordingly. —J. "choo-choo" Baldwin



Long Haul Cargo Bicycle

\$995 - \$1395
Information from Human-Powered Machines, P. O. Box 1005, Eugene, OR 97400; 503/343-5568

The Merle Clamp

Band clamps, and combinations of clamp and jig, are nothing especially new. But the peculiar-looking Merle is so well thought out that it may deserve its own category. It's a tool that enhances the user's imagination and ability.

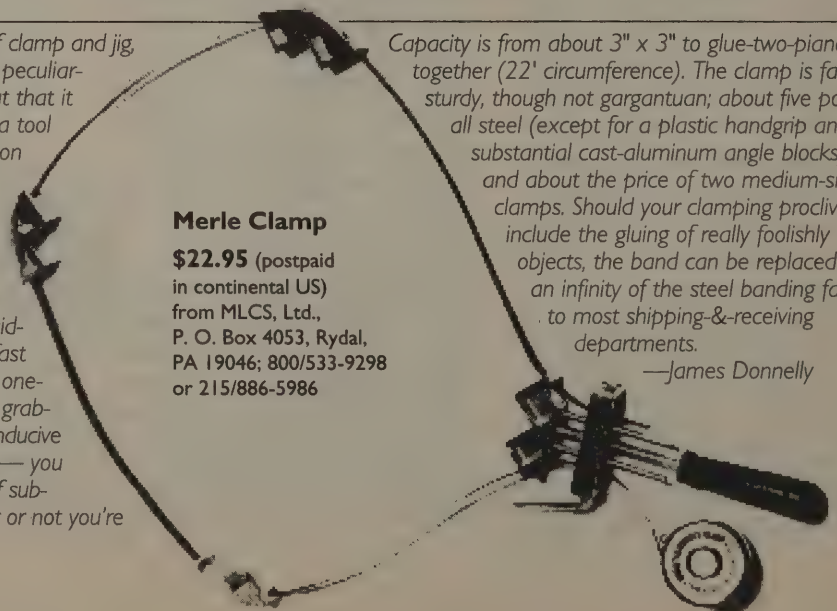
The Merle can clamp/jig squares and rectangles, half-rounds (D-shapes), triangles, circles, and bundles. In combination with basic homemade jigs, it'll clamp up considerably more complex shapes. It's fast and easy to use (though not quite one-handed) for tentative or emphatic grabbing of the workpiece. Thus it's conducive to try-fitting, futzing, and visualizing — you don't have to set up a little fleet of sub-clamps before you can see whether or not you're proceeding intelligently.

Merle Clamp

\$22.95 (postpaid in continental US) from MLCS, Ltd., P. O. Box 4053, Rydal, PA 19046; 800/533-9298 or 215/886-5986

Capacity is from about 3" x 3" to glue-two-pianos-together (22' circumference). The clamp is fairly sturdy, though not gargantuan; about five pounds; all steel (except for a plastic handgrip and substantial cast-aluminum angle blocks), and about the price of two medium-size C-clamps. Should your clamping proclivities include the gluing of really foolishly large objects, the band can be replaced with an infinity of the steel banding familiar to most shipping-&-receiving departments.

—James Donnelly



Shaker Life, Work, and Art

Ever wonder what inspires the admirably spare, efficient and elegant Shaker furniture? It turns out that their famous spindly-but-strong chairs are but one manifestation of an astonishingly consistent aesthetic that informed everything Shakers made (and the few remaining still make). Unlike the Amish, to whom they are not related, Shakers utilized technology for its efficiency and the envy-reducing uniformity of product necessary for the orderliness required by their utopian society. Their handiwork was integrated into the fabric of their daily lives in a manner reminiscent of the indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest. Like them, Shakers regarded "art" as useless.

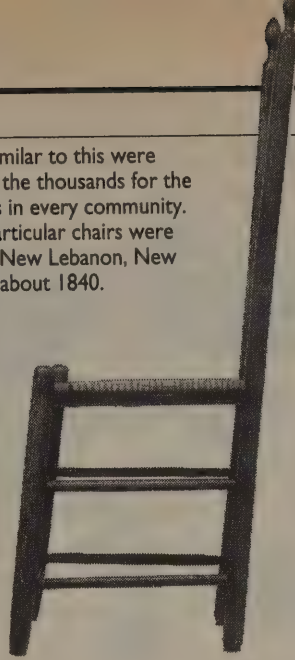
Except for its hefty size, this unusually beautiful book even looks graphically Shaker; it outlines their history and the beliefs that inspired them to produce wonderful things. The remarkable photographs quietly recognize Shaker accomplishments while silently indicting wasteful, glitzy pop culture — as it was in the early 1700s when Shakers got their start, and today.

This book is a work of art; it has been many years since I've encountered one as special. —J. Baldwin

A Shaker ladder-back chair typifies the Shaker approach to life and possessions. Straightforward and unadorned, it nevertheless reveals features intended for comfort and convenience. The seat is made of woven cloth tape, more comfortable than splint or rush. The chair angles back at a slant to provide relaxed seating. The chair is light enough to be easily portable and to hang from the pegboard — a handy place to put the chair while sweeping. The chairs were commonly hung upside down, so dust would not discolor the top of the seats.

The back posts have a unique feature — wooden ball-and-socket "tilter" feet that keep the back legs flat on the floor when the sitter leans back. The tilters are held in place by narrow leather strips threaded through a hole in the foot and through a hole drilled in the leg a few inches above the foot. Such feet were becoming common on Shaker chairs by the 1830s. In spite of admonitions against leaning backward in chairs — "It is not right to lean our chairs back against the wall in our dwelling houses nor any decent buildings; nor against any beds or furniture," reminded the Millennial Laws of 1821 — the habit persisted, and the practical Shakers adapted their chairs to suit. The main advantage was the protection of floorboards, most often made of soft pine, from the little dents that the hardwood legs of ordinary chairs would make.

Chairs similar to this were made by the thousands for the Believers in every community. These particular chairs were made at New Lebanon, New York, in about 1840.

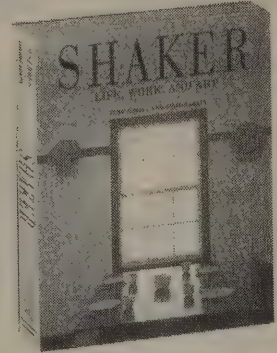


Here, a corner of the Center Family Dwelling at Pleasant Hill, Kentucky, shows a closet with a transom window above to admit light, and a Kentucky Shaker ladder-back chair, neatly hung upside down on the pegboard to prevent dust from settling on the top of the seat.

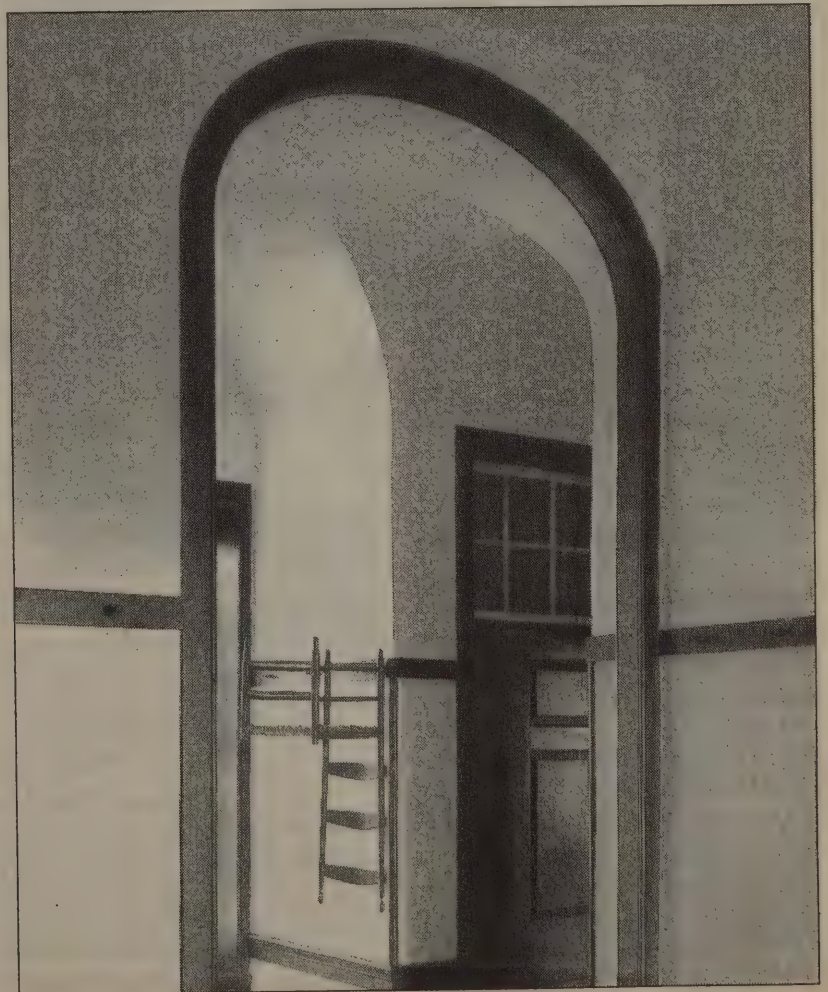
Shaker Life, Work, and Art

June Sprigg and David Larkin, 1991; 272 pp.

\$30 (\$34.50 postpaid) from Houghton Mifflin Company/Mail Order Dept., Wayside Road, Burlington, MA 01803; 800/225-3362 (or Whole Earth Access)



Shaker architecture in Kentucky is characterized by higher ceilings and airier halls than cozier New York and New England Shaker buildings. The high ceilings made sense in the warmer temperatures of the South. The use of arches is also more typical of Shaker buildings in Kentucky.





MUTUAL HYPNOSIS

Considering the importance of the state of consciousness known as empathy, it's surprising how little scientific research has been devoted to understanding it. Mutual hypnosis is a shared altered state that might prove to be a valuable probe for exploring the nature of empathy. It's also a strange and provocative thing to think about. George Gleason sets out a research agenda and provides a list of references for those who want to learn more about research into empathy. If you are a cognitive scientist, psychology student, clinical or experimental psychologist, here is a virtually untouched and potentially significant territory for research.

George Gleason is all over the map in a Whole Earth way. He has a bachelor's in comparative politics from Wesleyan and a master's in trans-personal psychology from John F. Kennedy University, and he works as a recording engineer at Polymorph Productions in Oakland. His email address is gg@well.sf.ca.us.

"Mutual Hypnosis" is a companion piece to "Charley Tart on Consensus Trance" (p. 34). Both articles look at human nature through the lens of trance states, from opposite ends of the telescope. —Howard Rheingold

C

BY
**GEORGE
GLEASON**

Illustration by
Jim Woodring

COMMUNICATION alters consciousness by shifting attention, inciting emotions, and calling up memories or anticipation. An exciting novel, an inspiring piece of music, an evocative painting, a stimulating conversation: all leave you with the feeling that you've been somewhere significant, at least for a while. Even dull prose is state-active: it bores you, which after all is a change of mood. If you're not really communicating, nothing much happens inside: rote recitations and conditioned responses can pour forth while your mind is undisturbed, your attention elsewhere.

Some of the most mind-altering communications aren't planned as such: affectionate words from a close friend warm your heart; an argument makes you angry. On the other hand, a song or a movie plot or other work of art may be deliberately crafted to inspire or frighten or amuse.

In Western clinical and experimental psychology, hypnosis is the deliberate use of patterned communication to induce an altered state. Cultures in all parts of the world and throughout recorded history have developed local variations on the theme of trance induction. The basic elements of rhythm and ritualized style of communication are universal.

As communication alters consciousness, mood and state affect the ways in which people communicate. The most obvious examples come from drug experiences, as illustrated by the highly characteristic speech patterns produced by alcohol and by psychedelics. However, drugs do us the disservice of obscuring more subtle instances that occur all the time. Remember the difference between a conversation held under stressful time pressure and one held under relaxed circumstances. Think of how an athletic performance improves when the team spirit is strong, or how musicians sound when they're in the groove. In both cases the group mind-state enhances the flow among performers, with results of which their audiences are keenly aware.

Communication alters consciousness, and altered states affect communication. What happens when you connect these variables together in a positive-feedback loop? Imagine for a moment a uniquely state-active way of communicating, and a state of consciousness uniquely sensitive to communication.

The term for this is mutual hypnosis. The experience ranges from something like a vivid fantasy all the way to an empathic/psychedelic trip complete with vivid multisensory imagery.

To date there are exactly ten published academic papers on this subject. The original research I did for my master's degree is being written up for publication in a peer-reviewed journal; hopefully it will become #11 in the literature on this topic, with more to follow.

The first paper on mutual hypnosis was published by Charles Tart in his classic anthology *Altered States of Consciousness* (1969, 1990; HarperSanFrancisco, SF). Tart was studying ways of increasing responsiveness to hypnotic suggestions; he reasoned that having two people simultaneously fulfill the roles of hypnotist and subject would lead to improved hypnotic communication, and therefore heightened response. Two psychology grad students were trained in basic hyp-

notic induction, including consecutive sessions in which each led the other into trance.

The mutual-hypnosis sessions differed radically from the more ordinary hypnotic work with which the students had become familiar. The usual instructions to relax deeply were supplanted with innovations of a kind that would later come to be associated with guided imagery.

Though neither participant had ever taken hallucinogens, characteristic psychedelic elements emerged. These included synaesthesia (merger of sensory elements, as for example feeling colors) and substantial changes in self- and body-image (such as feeling disembodied, feeling *transparent*). Throughout the mutual-hypnosis sessions, the sensory imagery was vivid and solid, as in lucid dreams or deep psychedelic experiences. Much of the content could be seen as psychoanalytically significant: a descent down a tunnel; an ascent into the heavens; meetings with archetypal figures.

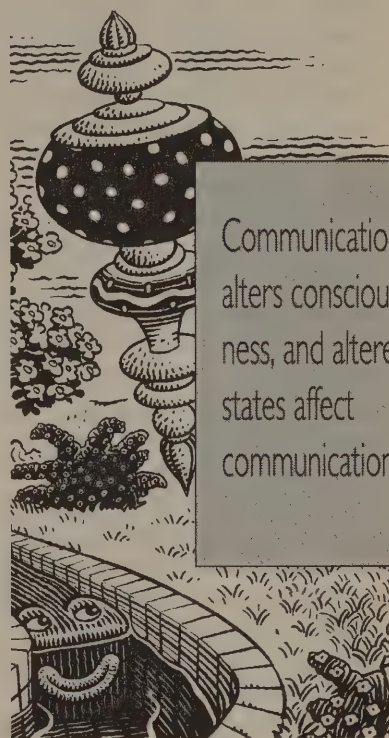
Interpersonal dynamics were strongly affected, as the participants rapidly developed an intimacy and guarded *their world* against the involvement of the researcher and another friend who was present. A degree of empathy developed in which experiences were shared with hardly a word said. The consistency of detail between participants amazed even them, as they reviewed the session tapes and heard long periods of silence where they were expecting volumes of words to have been exchanged.

The project raised a number of tantalizing questions, and others picked up the trail.

Following Tart's study, some researchers looked at clinical applications. Freda Morris (1970) and Michael Diamond (1980) used mutual hypnosis to induce trance in people who had difficulty attaining the trance state through more conventional means. The subject would be instructed in basic trance induction, and have the chance to lead the therapist into trance. The entranced therapist would then hypnotize the

subject. Morris reported success using this technique with clinical interns in training, and Diamond found it useful with clients in hypnotherapy.

Morris also reported on a long-term personal exploration of mutual hypnotherapy with a colleague, Marion Pastor (1973). In one procedure, they alternated hypnotist and client roles between themselves in the two consecutive hours which formed each complete session. They also used simultaneous inductions, to induce altered states in both individuals together.



Communication alters consciousness, and altered states affect communication.

Over the course of the project, Morris and Pastor became close personal friends. They reported dreamlike experiences, shared fantasies, and a range of intense emotions. Positive therapeutic outcomes included deep integration of repressed psychological material.

J. C. Hancock and E. Hackett (1979) used mutual hypnosis as a psychoanalytic adjunct, and reported a case involving a single individual. The procedure helped the client deal with early traumatic memories, and with transference issues that had occurred in therapy.

Mutual hypnosis in group therapy was explored by O'Hare (1972) and by Sanders (1973). In O'Hare's group, two psychology interns induced trance in each other under the guidance of two additional students, one of whom facilitated the experience while the other served as an observer and intermediary. In the reported session, the content of the "trip" was a visit to an imaginary ocean beach.

The participants had vivid and detailed experiences, some of which served to symbolically act out therapeutic themes. Picking up and examining bits of trash at the bottom of the water, getting stuck in seaweed and helping each other out of it, were among the examples mentioned. Session guidance directed the participants to deal with difficult issues, either directly or through changes in the story plot of the "trip." Though the symbolism was obvious, substantial benefits were achieved in areas including personal insight, social interaction, and interpersonal intimacy.

The focus of Sanders' study was creative problem-solving. Shared-trance techniques were used in a group context, along with other techniques such as posthypnotic suggestions to have solution-oriented dreams. Sanders measured an increase in creativity on a standard psychological test, given at the beginning and end of the project. Since no control group was provided, it remains to be seen whether (or to what degree) the shared-trance experiences were helpful as distinct from other aspects of the group process. However, Sanders' work suggested further avenues for research and clinical applications.

Why has there been no new work in this area in the last ten years? It can't be for lack of exciting subject matter; surely there are interesting waters to plumb, and new species of fish to discover there. As I developed my own research, it became apparent that there were some rather sticky methodological problems afoot.

How do you study empathy? First of all, there is little agreement on a basic definition; one paper went so far as to *exclude* "actually experiencing (the other) person's feelings" (Hogan, 1969). Clearly that wouldn't do. A broad search of the literature disclosed tests aimed at empathy as a personality variable, but no measures of empathy as related to state of consciousness. I've had to develop original measures in this area, which are themselves still under evaluation. The basic concept has to do with how much of each person's experience matches the other's, and more importantly the degree to which individuals are able to accurately and independently describe each other's experiences.

The concept of minimal communication cues bears further scrutiny. Most close friends have memories of times together that can be accessed with a simple phrase or a gesture. An empathic state should increase sensitivity, so that less information — the beginning of a word, a look in the eye — would elicit even more vivid recall. It remains to be seen how much of this is really improved non-verbal communication, versus enhanced recall, ESP, or imagination.

What does it mean to talk of a shared experience? On one level, people share experiences all the time, doing things together in daily life. It is one thing for two people to perceive the same stimuli, for example those of walking through the woods together. It is another thing when they experience the same responses — for example, aesthetic appreciation of beauty and feelings of peace. There is another subtle difference when the stimuli in question are imaginal, in the sense of originating in the minds of the beholders. At that point, emotional responses are not felt to be directed toward something "out there" such as a great old tree or a rushing stream, but rather toward something originating with the interpersonal interaction: more like what happens between musicians improvising in the rehearsal studio.

Studies of creative group dynamics seem to be more a part of the literature of business administration than experimental psychology: good for developing humane work situations, but less useful for understanding the relevant psychodynamics as such. Once again, more questions than answers. Studies of group trance in cultural anthropology and comparative religion are relevant; these remain to be more fully investigated under the shared-altered-states paradigm.

Finally, what difference does it make if two people can talk each other into a shared dreamworld? The research possibilities are exciting in and of themselves; studies of altered states typically shed light on questions of normal waking perception and cognition. In clinical and other applications, any technique that may help improve sensitivity, foster empathy, and exercise imagination vividly, is probably a good thing. ☞

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Flow

Optimal experiences are those times when people report feelings of concentration and deep enjoyment. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi says that what makes such experiences so satisfying is a state of consciousness called flow: people typically feel strong, alert, in effortless control, unselfconscious, at the peak of their abilities, transcending problems and everyday concerns. —William Calvin

■ When all a person's relevant skills are needed to cope with the challenges of a situation, that person's attention is completely absorbed by the activity. There is no excess psychic energy left over to process any information but what the activity offers. All the attention is concentrated on the relevant stimuli.

As a result, one of the most universal and distinctive features of optimal experience takes place: people become so involved in what they are doing that the activity becomes spontaneous, almost automatic; they stop being aware of themselves as separate from the actions they are performing.

■ The key element of an optimal experience is that it is an end in itself. Even if initially undertaken for other reasons, the activity that consumes us becomes intrinsically rewarding. Surgeons speak of their work: "It is so enjoyable that I would do it even if I didn't have to." Sailors say: "I am spending a lot of money and time on this boat, but it is worth it — nothing quite compares with the feeling I get when I am out sailing."

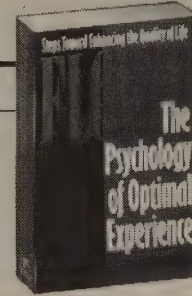
■ Even the simplest physical act becomes enjoyable when it is transformed so as to produce flow. The essential steps in this process are: (a) to set an overall goal, and as many subgoals as are realistically feasible; (b) to find ways of measuring progress in terms of the goals chosen; (c) to keep concentrating on what one is doing, and to keep making finer and finer distinctions in the challenges involved in the activity; (d) to develop the skills necessary to interact with the opportunities available; and (e) to keep raising the stakes if the activity becomes boring.

■ A thoroughly socialized person is one who desires only the rewards that others

around him have agreed he should long for — rewards often grafted onto genetically programmed desires. He may encounter thousands of potentially fulfilling experiences, but he fails to notice them because they are not the things he desires. What matters is not what he has now, but what he might obtain if he does as others want him to do. Caught in the treadmill of social controls, that person keeps reaching for a prize that always dissolves in his hands. In a complex society, many powerful groups are involved in socializing, sometimes to seemingly contradictory goals. On the one hand, official institutions like schools, churches, and banks try to turn us into responsible citizens willing to work hard and save. On the other hand, we are constantly cajoled by merchants, manufacturers, and advertisers to spend our earnings on products that will produce the most profits for them. And, finally, the underground system of forbidden pleasures run by gamblers, pimps, and drug dealers, which is dialectically linked to the official institutions, promises its own rewards of easy dissipation — provided we pay. The messages are very different, but their outcome is essentially the same: they make us dependent on a social system that exploits our energies for its own purposes.

● It is not unreasonable to regard Yoga as one of the oldest and most systematic methods of producing the flow experience. The details of how the experience is produced are unique to Yoga, as they are unique to every other flow activity, from fly-fishing to racing a Formula One car. As the product of cultural forces that occurred only once in history, the way of Yoga bears the stamp of the time and place in which it was created. Whether Yoga is a "better" way to foster optimal experience than others cannot be decided on its own merits alone — one must consider the opportunity costs involved in the practice, and compare them with alternative options. Is the control that Yoga makes possible worth the investment of psychic energy that learning its discipline requires?

■ Although, as we have seen, people generally long to leave their places of work and get home, ready to put their hard-earned free time to good use, all too often they have no idea what to do there. Ironically, jobs are actually easier to enjoy than free



Flow

(The Psychology of Optimal Experience)

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; 320 pp.

\$11 (\$13.75 postpaid) from HarperCollins Publishers/Direct Mail, P. O. Box 588, Dunmore, PA 18512; 800/331-3761 (or Whole Earth Access)

time, because like flow activities they have built-in goals, feedback, rules, and challenges, all of which encourage one to become involved in one's work, to concentrate and lose oneself in it. Free time, on the other hand, is unstructured, and requires much greater effort to be shaped into something that can be enjoyed. Hobbies that demand skill, habits that set goals and limits, personal interests, and especially inner discipline help to make leisure what it is supposed to be — a chance for recreation. But on the whole people miss the opportunity to enjoy leisure even more thoroughly than they do with working time. Over sixty years ago, the great American sociologist Robert Park already noted: "It is in the improvident use of our leisure, I suspect, that the greatest wastes of American life occur."

The tremendous leisure industry that has arisen in the last few generations has been designed to help fill free time with enjoyable experiences. Nevertheless, instead of using our physical and mental resources to experience flow, most of us spend many hours each week watching celebrated athletes playing in enormous stadiums. Instead of making music, we listen to platinum records cut by millionaire musicians. Instead of making art, we go to admire paintings that brought in the highest bids at the latest auction. We do not run risks acting on our beliefs, but occupy hours each day watching actors who pretend to have adventures, engaged in mock-meaningful action.

This vicarious participation is able to mask, at least temporarily, the underlying emptiness of wasted time. But it is a very pale substitute for attention invested in real challenges.

Less Than Words Can Say

Richard Mitchell's thesis is that there is an intimate link between our use of language and our thoughts; that the measure of our ability to think is our mastery of words, and that if we can no longer handle language with clarity and precision, our thoughts will likewise be muddy and imprecise. Only someone skilled in clear language and clear thought is capable of detecting empty slogans, meaningless catchphrases, and sloppy reasoning. If we do not understand our own language — the foundation of our ability to reason and to communicate — we are helpless against those who use language to manipulate and confuse us.

It's all been said before; by Plain English advocates, by Back-to-Basics educators, by teachers, by almost everybody. But Mitchell says it exhaustively, passionately and, above all, clearly. —Jeanne DeVoto

• A fluent command of English cannot exist as an isolated skill, a clever stunt. A person who speaks and writes his native tongue clearly and precisely does so because of many other abilities, and those other abilities themselves grow stronger through the fluent manipulation of language. The simple matter of being logical is a function of language. A million high school graduates capable of fluent English would be a million Americans capable of logical thought. What would we do with them, especially if they were black? You think they're going to buy those lottery tickets and lamps in the shape of Porky Pig? You think they're going to hang out on the corners and provide employment for everybody from the local social worker to the justices of the Supreme Court?

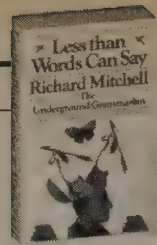
Well, don't worry. It's just a bad dream. Next June won't even saddle us with a million white high school graduates who are fluent in English. That too would be trouble.

■ Unfortunately, we just don't know how to teach skillful reading and writing without developing many undesirable and socially destructive side effects. Should we raise up a generation of literate Americans, very little of the America that we know would survive. We depend on a steady background level of ignorance and stupidity. A skillful reader, for instance, cannot be depended upon to buy this after-shave rather than some other because he is always weighing and considering statements that just weren't meant to be weighed and considered. He may capriciously and irresponsibly switch not only from one after-shave to another but even from one hot comb to another. Our industries depend on what we call "brand loy-

alty," and thoughtful readers will all be brand traitors. They may, even probably will, go the next step and become brand nihilists who decide not to buy any after-shave or hot comb at all. It may even occur to them that the arguments for the ownership of trash compactors and toaster ovens are specious, and then they won't buy any trash compactors or toaster ovens. Economic chaos will follow.

■ In the same circumstance, the Manhassetite will say, "I want food" and the Jiukiukwe will say, "As for me, there is hunger." Every other difference is because of this difference; this is the difference between the Manhassetites and the Jiukiukwe, the difference from which all smaller differences flow.

The Manhassetites speak a language in which the typical statement takes the form of a sentence that names a doer and his deed. The most common elaboration also names the "object" of his deed. "I want food" displays exactly the typical structure of the most ordinary Manhassetite utterance. The structure may be modified and elaborated in many ways, some of them quite extensive and complicated, but it remains the enduring skeleton of the typical statement: A doer does something, often to something or someone. The continuous re-appearance of this structure has taught all Manhassetites a particular view of the world and man's place in it. They understand the world as a place where doers do things.



Less Than Words Can Say

Richard Mitchell, 1981; 224 pp.

\$9.95 postpaid from Little, Brown & Co./ Order Dept., 200 West Street, Waltham, MA 02154; 800/343-9204 (or Whole Earth Access)

That is why many of them will get raises next year and dig bigger barbecue pits.

The Jiukiukwe, on the other hand, have been taught by the basic structure of their language that doing is properly the business of the things in the world around them. Nor do they think of themselves, again because of their grammar, as the "objects" of the things that are done in the world. For the Jiukiukwe, the inanimate or animal doers of deeds do them at most "insofar as he is concerned," as though he were, if not always an unaffected bystander, at least no more than accidentally related to what happens in the world. The Jiukiukwe are just there; the world does its things around them, sometimes "in their case." . . .

When a Manhassetite faces a problem, he asks, drawing upon the basic structure of his language, "What shall I do?" He looks for an action to perform. The Jiukiukwe is unlikely even to think that he faces a prob-

With the Tongues of Men and Angels

Channeling has been very popular for several years now. Most opinions about it are uninformed, and range from total rejection of it as blatant fraud or insanity to slavish devotion to some channeled "entity." Psychological and psychiatric professionals are generally as ignorant and biased about it as ordinary folk. Yet it can have powerful effects on people. Arthur Hastings, one of the pioneers of transpersonal psychology and a founder of its first center for graduate education (the Institute for Transpersonal Psychology in Menlo Park, California), has written the most psychologically sophisticated, yet easy to read, book on the subject. —Charles T. Tart

■ When I began, I assumed that topics such as these should not be dismissed without investigation. My intention was to study channeling with as few presuppositions as possible and to base any conclusions on what I found. I wanted to look at the evidence and its implications. I hoped neither to idealize channeling nor to discount it.

Frankly, I was not sure of what I would find.

I interviewed many people who channel. I located cases and experiences throughout history and read thousands of pages of books, poems, sermons, and teachings that have been channeled. Much of this material is abysmal, and I would not recommend it except as a remedy for insomnia. But I was surprised and impressed to find that the best of it is interesting, practical, provocative, insightful, and inspirational. Channeled communication, under many names, has played a significant role in human history.

■ Some human beings, perhaps many or all, have the capacity, from apparently unconscious sources, for talents and skills for which they have little or no training; that is, they can perform far beyond their knowledge or education. The skills are accessed through the channeling mode rather than the ego state. The skills include painting, music, poetry, creative writing, political decision-making, planning, spiritual teaching, therapeutic techniques, health diagnosis, and inspirational speaking. We do not know that every individual can channel some of these skills, but it is true that the individual's overt personality in most cases shows no sign of the talent that is there

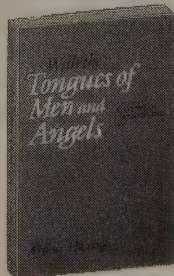
The Wrong Way Home

Arthur Deikman is a California psychiatrist, and one of the founders of transpersonal psychology. He is, on the one hand, open to our possibilities for psychological and spiritual growth (as expressed, for example, in his classic book *The Observing Self*). On the other hand, he is an expert on the way our idealism, and the impulse to be open, get distorted into cult behavior.

What is usually meant by "cult," of course, is an organized group of people that you don't like. But cult behavior does not occur just in exotic organizations of people you don't like: the warped feelings and perceptions that fuel such cults are actually widespread in everyday life and groups. The basic psychodynamics are nicely shown in a "Peanuts" cartoon, where Charlie Brown announces that security is riding in the back seat of the car, with Mom and Dad in the front seat, taking care of everything. This is an excellent guide on how to recognize these tendencies in yourself and others, and do something about them. —Charles T. Tart

- The wish to ride in the back seat of the car — the dependency dream — has great strength and tenacity. It should be recognized as a permanent part of the human psyche even though in adults it ceases to be as visible as it is in childhood. This dream

Saraswati, the deity of language, song, and logic. The formulas given to Ramanujan were acknowledged to be brilliant. When Cambridge mathematician Godfrey Hardy saw Ramanujan's formulas, he said, "They must be true, because if they were not true nobody could have had the imagination to invent them." Interestingly, not all were correct when the proofs were worked out; some were wrong.



With the Tongues of Men and Angels

Arthur Hastings, 1991; 232 pp.

\$12.95 (\$14 postpaid) from HBJ, 6277 Sea Harbor Drive, Orlando, FL 32887; 800/782-4479 (or Whole Earth Access)

lem, since that itself is a case of an agent doing something to something. Significantly, the Jiukiukwe language has no word for "problem." "Problem" can be thought of only in a language that can also think of "solution," and the relationship between the two is understood through a grammar that permits the idea of doers doing things.

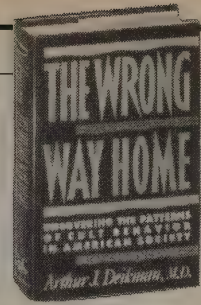
Although the Jiukiukwe seem to pay a heavy price for their grammar, they also take from it some advantages not available to the Manhassetites. They have, for instance, no warfare, because warfare not only arises from the willed deeds of agents but is itself a matter of willing agents doing things to each other. In any case, they don't even have the individual analogues of war: hatred, envy, and competitiveness. The Manhassetites are a small subgroup of a large, warlike tribe, which is, in turn, only one of many tribes loosely associated into an enormous culture in which warfare is a permanent institution and even the root of much of its most vigorous enterprise. Naturally, hatred, envy, and competition are almost universal among individual Manhassetites. For the Jiukiukwe there is essentially only one doer of things, and that is something like the world itself, which does what it does neither out of will nor out of design. It has no intentions; it just happens. For the Manhassetites, there are as many possible doers as there are members of the species or nouns in the language, and their grammar encourages them to envision a universe in which conflict of intentions is simply a part of the fabric of reality.

while channeling. Sometimes the person can direct these talents, such as with Cayce, and at other times they come with their own agenda, such as with Pearl Curran.

- Many messages from the channeling process can be categorized as spiritual teachings. Generic New Age platitudes are frequent, but a few communications are quite sophisticated systems of psychological or spiritual development. There is ample precedent for channeled religious teaching, since this process of receiving information and teaching from sources outside the self is a form of revelation found in many traditions.

An example of a current channeled spiritual teaching is *A Course in Miracles*. The material was dictated by an inner voice to Dr. Helen Schucman, an academic psychologist. The speaker eventually identified himself as Jesus, much to the embarrassment of the recipient, who considered herself to be an atheistic Jew.

- Ramanujan said that he received many of his mathematical concepts from the Indian goddess Namagiri, a local deity, and from



The Wrong Way Home

Arthur J. Deikman, 1991; 192 pp.

\$19.95 (\$22.95 postpaid) from Beacon Press, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108; 617/742-2110 (or Whole Earth Access)

is dangerous because in its most extreme form it generates cults and makes people vulnerable to exploitation, regression, and even violence. Even in the less intense, less obvious manifestations which occur in everyday society, the dependency dream may impair our ability to think realistically. If we recognize our dependent wishes for what they are we can make appropriate corrections in thought and behavior, but usually we do not. Rather, we engage in thinking and behavior more subtle than that of the People's Temple but qualitatively similar.

- Cults present us with images of surrender, violence, sex, and power. We respond to them with avid interest because they speak to unconscious wishes. Moreover, we can watch at a seemingly safe distance because the cults of which we are aware usually have foreign trappings or unusual social structures that separate them from ordinary society and from ourselves. Without such markings, however, cult behavior is not usually recognized, especially when this behavior is our own.

- I can offer a checklist of everyday behaviors that you may recognize all too well:

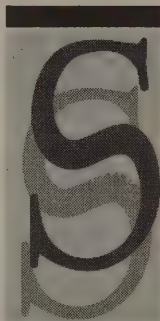
1. Speaking of adversaries or outsiders (e.g., conservatives, liberals, Yuppies, blue-collar, rich, poor) as if they were all the same; characterizing them by negative traits only; attributing unflattering motives to them but not to oneself.
2. Lacking interest and information concerning the actual statements and actions of opponents or outsiders.
3. Failing to consider the possible validity of an adversary's point of view.
4. Not taking a critical look at one's own position.
5. Disapproving or rejecting a member of one's group for departing from the group position, devaluing the dissident, regarding him or her as an annoyance or a problem.
6. Feeling self-righteous.



Charley Tart on Consensus Trance: (SLAP SLAP) Wake up!

The relationship between the use of language and the induction of trance states might be one of the keys to understanding life in the last years of the technology millennium. What if we're all in a trance, and have been given hypnotic suggestions to ignore the evidence that we are in a trance? As we stumble around, bedazzled, enormous machines eat the earth. How would we treat people who try to tell us that we need to wake up?

Ask Charley Tart. As Professor of Psychology at the University of California, Davis, where he has taught, conducted research, and written books for 26 years, Charles Tart, Ph.D., qualifies as a tweedcoat and even a whitecoat. He is a member in good standing of the science cult, and his down-to-earth, low-key presentation lends an unexpected insider punch to his statements about the science cult's blind spots — and every human's blind spots. He thinks of himself as a scientist, not a guru, working in a field that is underpopulated despite its importance. It is underpopulated because research into consciousness is dangerous to an experimental psychologist's career, and because it isn't easy to do the kind of research that can get the attention of the orthodoxy. Tart's most recent book is *Waking Up: Overcoming the Obstacles to Human Potential* (p. 36). When we decided to publish George Gleason's "Mutual Hypnosis" (p. 28), I remembered some notes I had made when I talked with Tart a couple of years ago. You can contact Dr. Tart via email: cttart@ucdavis.edu. —HLR



BY
HOWARD
RHEINGOLD

Illustration by
Jim Woodring

STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS, from altered states to the state earthlings call "normal waking consciousness," have been Charley Tart's specialty for two decades. Surprisingly, Dr. Tart no longer calls the latter state "normal consciousness," and has substituted what he feels to be a more accurate term: *consensus trance*. To him, the idea of "normal consciousness" is the kind of convenient fiction illustrated by "The Emperor's New Clothes." Human groups agree on which of their perceptions should be admitted to awareness (hence *consensus*), then they train each other to see the world in that way and only in that way (hence *trance*).

In the 1960s, Tart's groundbreaking scientific articles about hypnosis and dreams appeared in psychological journals; in 1969 he published a collection of scientific articles, *Altered States of Consciousness* (1969, 1990; HarperSanFrancisco, SF), bringing together laboratory studies of yogis, analysis of the brain waves of Zen masters, and research into hypnotically induced dreams, lucid dreams, mutual hypnosis, and other borderlands of human consciousness that were beginning to attract scientific attention.

By his account, Charles Tart's childhood interest in his own vivid dream life — a wondrous realm that everybody around him declared to be "unreal" — was a factor in his decision to become a psychologist. Each night, in the dream state, he discovered as all children do that he could visit magical kingdoms and do all manner of miraculous things. And like all children, when he told his parents about these dreams he was reminded that such experiences are "figments of the imagination." If his nocturnal adventures were not considered to be legitimate reality by the adults he told about his dreams, what was so special about being awake that made it more real? And why do people, when awake, seem oblivious of the existence of that other, magical realm of dream consciousness?

Experimental psychology was the vehicle Tart chose to pursue his questions about consciousness and reality. Although much of his early research involved dreaming, he was attracted to the mysterious altered state of consciousness known as hypnosis. Tart learned from his earliest experiences as a hypnotist that reality can be influenced far more strongly by one's state of mind than most people suspect, most of the time:

"In inducing hypnosis I would sit down with a volunteer who wanted to be hypnotized," Tart recalled. "We were presumably both normal people. With our eyes we presumably saw the same room around us that others saw; with our ears we presumably heard the ordinary sounds in the room. We smelled what odors were there and felt the solidity of the real objects in the room.

"Then I began to talk to the subject. Researchers give the style of talking the special name of 'hypnotic induction procedure,' but basically it was just talking. The subject was given no drugs, was not in a special environment, had nothing external done to his brain — and yet in twenty minutes I could drastically change the universe he lived in. With a few words, the subject could not lift his arm. With a few more he heard

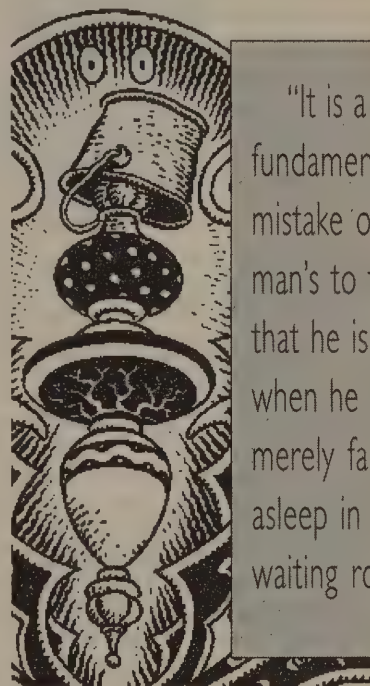
voices talking when no one was there. A few more words and he could open his eyes and see something that no one else could see, or, with the right suggestion, a real object in plain sight in the room would be invisible to him."

How can anybody distinguish, then, between dream, hypnotic trance, and reality? *Dehypnotization*, the procedure of breaking out of the normal human state of awareness, according to both mystics and hypnotists, is a matter of direct mental experience. The method can be learned, and that's the nutshell description of the esoteric wisdom of the ages.

The clues from hypnosis research, experiments into the influence of beliefs upon perceptions, and teachings from the mystical traditions, led Tart to see how normal waking consciousness is the product of a true hypnotic procedure that is practiced by parents, teachers, and peers, reinforced by every social interaction, and maintained by powerful taboos. Consensus trance induction — the process of learning the "normal waking" state of mind — is involuntary, and occurs under conditions that give it far more power than ordinary hypnotists are ever allowed. When infants are first subjected to the processes that induce consensus trance, they are vulnerable and dependent upon their consensus hypnotists, for their parents are the ones who initiate them into the rules of their culture, according to the instructions that have been impressed upon them by their own parents, teachers, and peers.

Among the techniques prohibited to ethical hypnotists but wielded effectively in the induction of consensus trance are: the enormous amount of time devoted to the induction (years to a lifetime), the use of physical force, emotional force, love and validation, guilt, and the instinctive trust children have for their parents. As they learn myriad versions of "the right way to do things" — and the things *not* to do — from their parents, children build and continue

to maintain a mental model of the world, a filter on their reality lens through which they learn to perceive everything (except partially in dreams). The result leaves most people in an automatized daze. "It is a fundamental mistake of man's to think that he is alive, when he has merely fallen asleep in life's waiting room," is the way Idries Shah, a contemporary exponent of ancient Middle Eastern mystical psychologies, put it (*Seeker After Truth*, Octagon Press, 1982).



"It is a fundamental mistake of man's to think that he is alive, when he has merely fallen asleep in life's waiting room."

If humans are indeed on the verge of realizing that we are caught in illusion while thinking we are perceiving reality, how do we propose to escape? The answer, Tart has concluded, could come in the form of "mindfulness training" — a variety of exercises for elevating awareness by deliberately paying closer-than-usual attention to the mundane details of everyday life. Gurdjieff called it "self-remembering," and many flavors of psychotherapy, East and West, use it. Mindfulness is a skill that can be honed by the right approach to what is happening right in front of you: "Be here now" as internal gymnastics. Working, eating,

waiting for a traffic light to change can furnish opportunities for mindfulness. Observe what you are feeling, thinking, perceiving, don't get hung up on judging it, just pay attention. Tart thinks this kind of self-observation — *noticing* the automatization — is the first step toward waking up.

Why aren't the psychology departments of every major university working on the best ways to de-hypnotize ourselves?

"We tend to think of consensus consciousness like a clearing in the wilderness," Tart replied. "We don't know what monsters are out there. We've made a place that's comfortable and fortified, and we are very ambivalent about leaving this little clearing for even a moment."

Most of the world's major value

systems, Tart contends, are based on an extraordinary state of consciousness on the part of a prophet, or a group of people. To Christians, being "born again" is an altered state of consciousness. Moses heard sacred instructions from a burning bush. Mohammed received the Koran in a dream. Buddha sat under a tree and woke up. Most of the values that guide people's lives around the world today are derived from those extraordinary states of mind.

"If the sources of our values derive from altered-states experiences, and if we want to have some intelligent control of our destiny, we'd better not define these states out of existence. They are the vital sources of life and culture and if we don't really understand altered states we're going to live a very dispirited life."

I asked Tart if he sees a way out of this dilemma of self-reinforcing institutional and individual trancemanship.

"Yes, I do," he replied. "We are indoctrinated to believe that intellect is what makes humans great, and emotions are primitive leftovers from our jungle ancestors that interfere with our marvelous logical minds. It is possible to train people to base decisions on the appropriate mixture of emotional, intellectual and body-instinctive intelligence. Compassion and empathy are emotions, and I agree with the Buddhists that these emotions are highly evolved, not primitive. With enough training in self-observation, we can develop a new kind of intelligence to bear on the world. Everyday life is quite an interesting place if you pay attention to it." ☸

Waking Up

In the early twentieth century, G. I. Gurdjieff, a mysterious and charismatic figure, started telling people in Paris and St. Petersburg and New York that he had learned how to awaken from consensus trance, and could teach others. Gurdjieff claimed to have learned the art of awakening from Sufi masters and other "remarkable men" he had encountered during a decades-long quest in Central Asia. One key to Gurdjieff's method was that it is not necessary to believe in any dogma, only to perform certain experiments, to achieve the results he claimed. Another key was that it did not require complete retreat from secular life; "the Work" could be accomplished in the midst of daily life. But the bulk of the experiential component of the method was long unknown to those outside Gurdjieff's inner circle. A veil of secrecy surrounded the methods he taught directly to his disciples, although Gurdjieff was the author of several books (written in a convoluted, elusive style).

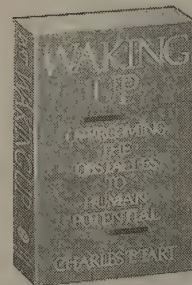
*Gurdjieff died in 1946, but his disciples have continued the tradition into the 1990s. Once-secret ideas, however, have leaked out of Gurdjieff's disciples' control, and some of them were deliberately revealed. **Waking Up** is Charles T. Tart's exposition of Gurdjieffian ideas in terms of contemporary cognitive sciences and plainspoken common sense. Learning to*

pay attention, for example, is one of the first steps toward full awakening. Where Gurdjieff's students performed esoteric exercises, Tart shows how you can exercise the same faculty by playing a game of ordinary solitaire with the right kind of mindfulness. —Howard Rheingold

• This book is about waking up, a necessary step to create the foundation for inner peace as well as greater effectiveness in the world. It is about the psychological and cultural processes that create inner conflict, delusion, needless suffering, and hostility in us, that unnecessarily divide us from others, that deepen our sleep. Few of us may be in a position to have a decisive influence on world peace, but the cultivation of our own inner resources can create peacefulness and effectiveness in action in ourselves and the people we come into contact with, and this can spread. As we attack those near us less and care for them more, we start to have an effect on the kinds of political processes that need enemies for hidden psychological reasons. It is my hope that furthering the creation of inner peace in people will contribute to outer peace in the world.

• Gurdjieff intimated that the core of his work was based on the deliberate efforts of a secret school of wise men, a school some have claimed to be the mythical Sarmouni Brotherhood. I find this idea

appealing, as I want to believe that there are advanced and wise people who are trying to help the rest of us evolve. We certainly need them! I do not know if there are such secret schools of the wise, and for our purposes in this book, it doesn't matter. As a psychologist with both practical and theoretical knowledge of the human mind, and as a person who has learned a little in my attempts to seek the light, I know that Gurdjieff's formulations of the human condition and many of his techniques for working on oneself are accurate, ingenious, and effective. That is what makes them worth sharing.



Waking Up

Charles T. Tart, 1987; 323 pp.

\$13 (\$16 postpaid) from Shambhala Publications/Order Dept., P. O. Box 308, Boston, MA 02117-0308; 617/424-0228 (or Whole Earth Access)

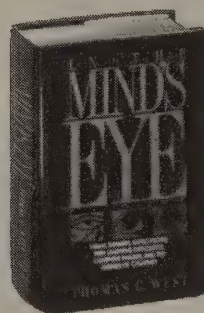
In The Mind's Eye

Words such as "imagination" and "insight" reveal a connection between vision and creative thinking, yet visual thinking is not an important part of the educational curriculum. To make matters worse, certain kinds of visual thinkers find it difficult to survive in classrooms that teach reading, writing, and arithmetic in the traditional manner. Is dyslexia a "learning disability," or simply a different way of seeing the world? Some people who see the world differently also think about the world differently, and more than a few of those people have been labeled "genius" rather than "disabled." Albert Einstein was a poor student, but he was able to think in terms of images. Nikola Tesla

not only had the ability to think in images, but was able to design machines (such as the electrical dynamo he is credited with inventing) in his mind's eye. Tesla could visualize a design of a machine, then set the machine "running" in his imagination and check it to see if any parts were out of balance. As this book attests, Einstein and Tesla were among dozens of similar geniuses who might not make it through third grade today.

Thomas G. West investigates the connections between dyslexia, visual thinking, genius, and education. In the process, he shows how educational systems that concentrate on verbal abilities and assign

visual thinkers to a "disability" category may be weeding out the very creative thinkers our culture needs. West also points out that the visually oriented computers and multimedia technology now beginning to emerge may prove to be useful tools for helping train visual thinking talents. The case histories are fascinating, the scientific explanations are easily readable, and the bibliography is extensive. —Howard Rheingold



In The Mind's Eye

Thomas G. West, 1991; 359 pp.

\$24.95 (\$27.95 postpaid) from Prometheus Books/Warehouse & Fulfillment Center, 59 John Glenn Drive, Amherst, NY 14228-2197; 800/421-0351

Daydreaming

It is conceivable that there are people who know more about daydreaming than Eric Klinger, but it is unlikely. In this encyclopedic and fascinating book, you find out all kinds of interesting things about daydreaming, a phenomenon that is part of everyone's life and one that plays a more important role in our lives than we imagine. Daydreams reveal a great deal about us, and they can be used to do a number of useful things, such as help us make decisions and enhance our sense of well-being and creativity.

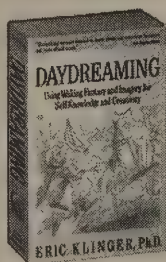
Klinger asserts that we spend "on average about half of our mental activity on some kind of daydreaming." That suggests that daydreaming must have some key survival functions. He goes on to deal with these functions and the many benefits we can get from using and controlling our daydreaming in a well-organized, illuminating, and highly readable book.

—Arthur Asa Berger

Daydreaming is both one of the most common and one of the most private things we do. Your daydreams are intensely personal and intensely revealing, because they are you in action within the arena of your mind. They are triggered by your emotional reactions and shaped by your desires and fears. Daydreams are so much a part of you that what you experience in them affects what you do in the real world. Paradoxically, daydreaming is one of the ways in which you keep your life organized, a way to milk your experiences for the lessons they hold, and a way of rehearsing for the future. It is a natural way of improving the efficiency with which we use our brains.

A large part of what goes on in daydreaming is reviewing your past experiences and rehearsing for the future. You play through your mind the personal interactions you have had or expect to have — the conversations, lovemaking, victimizations, self-defense, violence — and you assess the consequences. Often, in the process, you change your mind about what will work or will not work. You learn.

The reason this is possible is that your imaginary self is a large part of your real self. In imagining, you are mobilizing some of the same brain systems that would be involved in reality. When you imagine seeing someone, part of your visual system gets involved. When you imagine hugging someone, you activate part of the hugging system. When you imagine confronting an exaggerated fear, you activate real fear and, having called its bluff, weaken it.



Daydreaming

Eric Klinger, 1990; 331 pp.

\$12.95 (\$15.45 postpaid) from Publishers Book & Audio, P. O. Box 120159, Staten Island, NY 10312; 800/288-2131 (or Whole Earth Access)

In an effort to comfort parents and children, it is often pointed out that a number of famous people — artists, writers, scientists and others — were able to achieve a great deal despite of having had, apparently, some form of dyslexia or learning disability, or, at the very least, some substantial form of learning difficulty. Hans Christian Andersen, Albert Einstein, Thomas Edison, Gustave Flaubert, Harvey Cushing, Auguste Rodin, Leonardo da Vinci, George Patton, William James, King Karl XI of Sweden, Woodrow Wilson, Nelson Rockefeller, William Butler Yeats and others have been identified by various writers as having had some form of dyslexia or learning disability.

If we continue to turn out people who have primarily the skills (and outlook) of the clerk, however well trained, we may increasingly be turning out people who will, like the unskilled laborer of the last century, have less and less to sell in the marketplace. Sometime in the not too distant future machines will be the best clerks. It will be left to humans to maximize what is most valued among human capabilities and what machines cannot do — and increasingly these are likely to involve the insightful and integrative capacities associated with visual modes of thought.

XOCHIPILLI:



Plants of the Gods

A FEW YEARS AGO, BACK WHEN “designer drugs” were still too new to be illegal, an artist who calls himself LordNose! went to a party. The people there were (or considered themselves to be) the current cognoscenti of techno-consciousness: computer hackers, psychologists, writers. LordNose! found himself caught up in a conversation with a couple of journalists talking about the latest hot topic, new psychedelics, which he knew by their more intimate names, “Adam,” “Eve,” “Escaline.”

The first journalist, holding a drink, told LordNose! that “Ecstasy” (that’s MDMA or “Adam”) causes a loss of spinal fluid. The second, with a cigarette, reported that MDMA causes Parkinson’s disease. Absolutely: He’d heard it on the news.

The context for ecstasy — the body of knowledge, belief, story, art, and ritual that supports the occasional practice of getting out of one’s mind and out into the rest of the universe — is strangely central to many of the problems we are facing in the global technologopolis. Something’s happening on the planet, and those of us who have the most to do with making it happen know the least about it. Those of us in cities have very few sensors left to perceive the natural world, and few clues to ways of feeling any personal relationship to even small pieces of the living planet. The developed world since the industrial revolution has been the first civilization (that it knows of) out of the countless civilizations that have come and gone, that has had to deal with technology as well as human behavior and the natural world. In the process of creating a marvelously godlike machinery, a civilization has arisen where ecstasy has no sanctioned context. A few other civilizations, almost all of them extinct, did have such contexts. These other civilizations left messages for us, carved in stone.

LordNose! came to us with a story of ethnobotanical adventure, ancient spiritual traditions, and digital art — an irresistible combination — but he’s an image artist, not a writer, so we teamed him up with Laura Fraser to tell the story of his quest. Fraser is a freelance San Francisco writer; LordNose! is a wandering minstrel and digital historian of ecstatic states. —Howard Rheingold

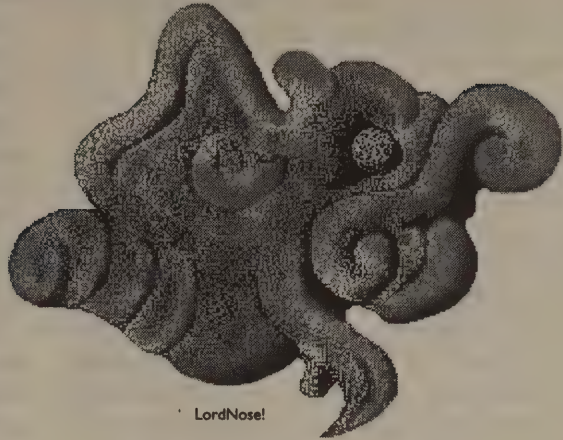
A CONTEXT FOR ECSTASY

BY LAURA FRASER

LordNose! understood that MDMA, an empathogen-entactogen, was a substance that promotes the communication of feelings both with others and within oneself. It did have a few unpleasant side effects, and wasn't to be taken lightly. You had to do a little research to know you should avoid taking MDMA with unknown combinations of drugs, particularly certain antidepressants called monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs). This combination may cause dangerous elevation of body temperature and blood pressure. If you are taking an antidepressant and are unsure as to whether it is an MAOI, stop and find out *before* exploring. But otherwise, to his knowledge, MDMA's side effects were mainly limited to some mild jaw-clenching and an embarrassing tendency to call up ex-lovers and casual acquaintances to tell them how much you love them. The jaw-clenching part, at least, could be alleviated by taking a little calcium and magnesium before the MDMA and plenty of fluids during the session to prevent dehydration.

But where did the journalists — folks who were supposed to be in the know, with reliable "expert" sources — come up with these apocryphal tales? As it turned out, the spinal-fluid story came from a study of MDMA by Dr. George Ricaurte at Stanford to determine if there were any residual effects of the MDMA. In fact, no effects were found, and the only spinal fluid lost was what the researchers took out of the subjects' bodies themselves. The Parkinson's Disease rumor came in the aftermath of a bad batch of a synthetic opiate that contained the neurotoxin MPTP, which people were shooting on the street as a heroin substitute, and which did, sadly, cause a few individuals to get the disease. The media were indiscriminately calling both MPTP and MDMA "designer drugs," despite the fact that they come from entirely different chemical (and spiritual) universes.

There was a bad batch of information out there. As far as the media and even a few intelligent party-goers were concerned, one "designer drug" was the same as another. Most of the information circulating



LordNose!

in magazines was erroneous, emphasizing either the simple hedonistic aspects of particular substances or warning of the ominous consequences of their use. (This year's undocumented newspaper accounts of numerous deaths due to MDMA in England are the latest rash of unexamined rumors about MDMA.) Much of the scientific literature on the traditional psychedelics and the newer compounds, such as MDMA, that are more appropriately classified as empathogens-entactogens, was hidden in relatively obscure journals, and often tainted with the usual government-approved biases that tend to distort reality. Recent pronouncements by scientists such as Dr. Stephen Peroutka at Stanford University School of Medicine that MDMA may have damaging effects on the human brain also go unchallenged. "The more (MDMA) you take, the more negative it becomes," he claims, without distinguishing reduced benefits from negative effects. As for damaging nerve cells, as Peroutka suggests, pharmacologist and chemist Dr. Alexander T. Shulgin says MDMA probably doesn't have that effect. "The most damning statement is that there is some damage to axons, bitty projections that are associated with neurons, but which seem to eventually repair." The scientific disinformation that was widely reported supported the government's ban on psychedelic drugs based on their abuse potential, not their neurotoxicity.

All this misinformation, thought LordNose!, needed to be countered with a healthy dose of something better. So he and a few scientists set out to create a benchmark of reliable information that they hoped would spread like wildfire. They synthesized the available information on psychedelics, bringing together experiential observations and suggestions with hardheaded scientific research. "We've

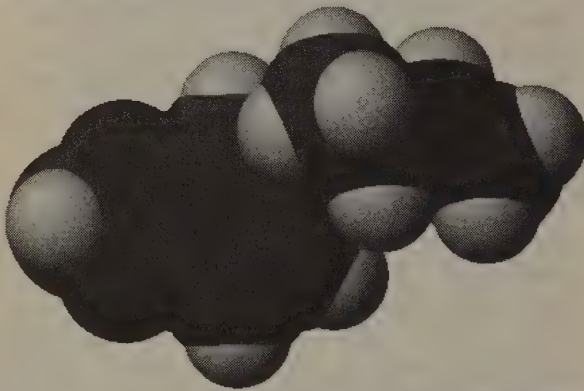
avoided telling people, 'take this, and that will happen,' " says LordNose!. "We're not advocating illegal drug use. We just want to give some factual grounding to the population that uses drugs and to counter some of the poisonous propaganda out there."

It proved challenging, however, to present that information in a concise, user-friendly form. Much of it is difficult to explain, simply because we have so few words to describe experiences outside our consensus reality. In order to describe the effects of psychedelics, it's necessary to put them into some kind of cultural context we can read: Are these compounds used for healing? Exploration? Divination? Recreation? But in the midst of a just-say-no social outlook, there is no widespread context other than abuse, no concept of appropriate "set and setting." As Shulgin put it in his new book, *PIHKAL: A Chemical Love Story* (WER #72, p. 22), "This society

has made self-exploration against the law."

To communicate about psychedelics, then, it became necessary to communicate something of a culture that put these substances in a different light, that viewed their use as sacred and healing. LordNose! found such a symbol of that culture, a communication of its spirit, when he was paging through *The Wondrous Mushroom: Mycolatry in Mesoamerica* (McGraw-Hill, 1980), by the late ethnomycologist R. Gordon Wasson, a Morgan Bank vice-president. Inside was a photo of the awesome statue of the Aztec deity Xochipilli, "Prince of Flowers."

Wasson himself was intrigued with the statue, which sits in the Museo Nacional de Antropologia in Mexico City, because no other culture he knew of dedicated a divinity to flowers. But he was also suspicious of those flowers: "Do the 'flowers' of which



Psychoactive Taxonomy from the Xochipilli Speaks poster

MDMA

Name: 3,4-Methylenedioxymethamphetamine.

Class: Phenethylamine / Empathogen-Entactogen.

Dosage: 100-150 mg / oral.

Duration: 30-60 minutes to onset; 2-3 hour plateau; 6 hours to baseline.

Effects: Ego softening; neurotically based fear dissolution; feelings of emotionally based love and empathy. No visual effects. Lucidity retained, in-depth communication facilitated. Present moment awareness heightened.

Side effects: Appetite loss; stimulation; mild jaw-clenching; mild to moderate post-session fatigue.

Occasional nystagmus (lateral eye wiggle). Initial restlessness, nervousness, nausea, shivering or tremor. **CAUTION:** May induce inappropriate and unintended emotional-bond imprinting. Note: Reversible nerve cell toxicity has been reported in laboratory animals at a dose equivalent to human consumption of 175 mg or more.

Contraindications: Concurrent use of stimulants or MAO inhibitors (see Warning). Heart ailments, glaucoma, hypertension, aneurism or "stroke" history, hepatic or renal disorders, diabetes or hypoglycemia.

Context: Light and warm environment; with a loved one or a few close friends, but sometimes with many others in celebration.

KETAMINE

Name: 2-(2-Chlorophenyl)-2-(methylamino)-cyclohexanone.

Class: Miscellaneous / Entheogen (?).

Dosage: 80-120 mg / insufflated ("snorted"). Orally inactive.

Duration: 2-5 minutes to onset; 30-45 minute plateau; 2-3 hours to baseline.

Effects: Refocusing of consciousness to normally unconscious realms. Serene detachment from emotionally charged personal content. Sense of benignly objective omniscience. Out-of-body experience.

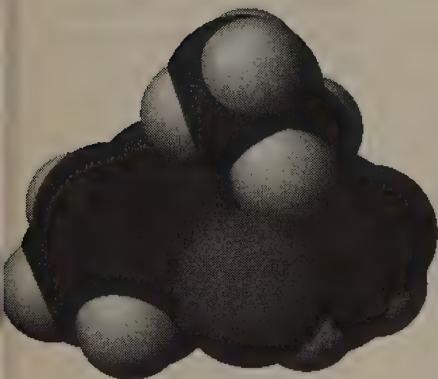
Side effects: Physical inertia, semiconsciousness, post-session grogginess, occasional nausea and vomiting.

Xochipilli is Prince mean flowers?" he wondered. The deity, he noted, isn't looking earthward; toward any flowers, but ecstatically upward, toward his heaven or visions or sky. Nor is the deity showing his plain face to the sky; it is covered with a mask, which, Wasson surmised, indicates that the god is not seeing with ordinary eyes, but with the nonordinary eyes of the soul. He is in ecstasy, "in a far-off world."

Wasson took a closer look at the flowers, which hadn't yet been fully identified by modern botanists. The first thing that caught his attention were what seemed to be mushrooms (naturally, since he was an amateur mycologist). These were eventually identified as *Psilocybe aztecorum*, or the renowned psilocybin mushrooms that grow only on the sacred volcano Popocatepetl in southern Mexico, near where Xochipilli was unearthed. Carved on Xochipilli's stone body are moths feasting on the

mushrooms — not ordinarily moth food. However, these moths seem to represent departed spirits feasting on "the food of the gods," as Wasson put it, "to whose world the mushrooms transport for a brief spell the people of this sad workaday world."

Wasson enlisted the help of Harvard ethnobotanist Dr. Richard Evans Schultes [author of *Plants of the Gods* — EWEC, p. 220] to identify the other botanical species represented on Xochipilli's stone body. One is *Turbina corymbosa*, a morning glory endowed with lysergic acid derivatives. Another is *Heimia salicifolia*, or "sinicuichi" of the Mexican highlands, a mild auditory hallucinogen. Xochipilli, Wasson concluded, is a god undergoing an intense, spiritual, ecstatic experience. "The artist who carved Xochipilli was giving us reality transfigured, was giving us what the Indian would feel that he was living through, was giving us Rapture petrified."



Contraindications: High blood pressure, "stroke" history, glaucoma.

Context: Because this experience induces unconsciousness or semi-consciousness, a partner is required to stand by for any physical needs of the subject. Likewise, fasting for several hours and voiding the bowels and bladder before dosing are highly recommended. A bed or deep reclining chair in a quiet room offers the best place to be. Sessions conducted in the early evening allow

a post-session sleep to replace any residual grogginess. Ingestion of the liquid solution of this drug is best accomplished by administering half in each nostril while hanging the head upside down, off the edge of a bed. Alternatively, evaporating the solution allows for insufflation of the resulting crystalline powder.

DMT

Name: N,N-Dimethyltryptamine.

Class: Indole (Tryptamine) / Entheogen.

Dosage: 25-50 mg / smoked; 50-100 mg / oral.

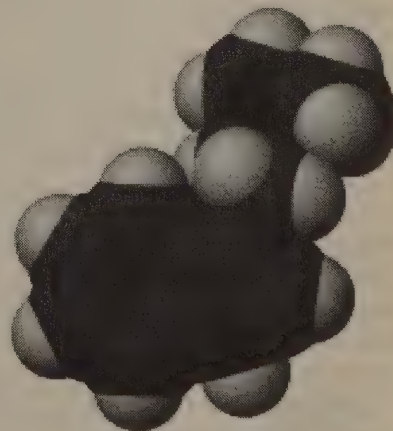
Duration: (Smoked) 15-30 seconds to onset; 15-30 minute plateau; 45-60 minutes to baseline. (Oral) 30-60 minutes to onset; 3-4 hour plateau; 6 hours to baseline.

Effects: Initial overwhelming rush of colorful kaleidoscopic imagery with substantial ego loss. Auditory tones. Spectacular visions. Calm and centered psychedelic afterglow.

Side effects: Strong indole ("burnt plastic") aftertaste when smoked. Possible loss of balance; headache; fear or panic.

Contraindications: Latent psychoses, borderline schizophrenia; obsessive ego attachment.

Context: Dark and quiet environment while sitting down with option to lie back (e.g., floor, edge of bed, isolation tank); attendant helpful to handle smoking ritual, others superfluous.



Mesoamerican nobility, said Wasson, considered these entheogenic "flowers" sacred; sacred enough to devote one of their finest works of art to this deity.

LordNose! and a friend went down to Mexico City to see Xochipilli for themselves and to photograph him for their project. They had walked through the anthropology museum for about an hour, gradually becoming more attuned with the people, masks and deities around them, when they reached the Mixtec room where Xochipilli and the famous Aztec calendar stone reside. At that point they were flying higher than eagles, says LordNose! — earlier they had prepared by ingesting a modern entheogen.

LordNose! approached Xochipilli and offered him a little tobacco in homage. Suddenly, he says, "everything became alive." Spirits paraded by in a passing show of civilizations — streams of ancient and otherworldly beings electrifying the air. LordNose! was alternately drawn to Xochipilli, sitting in quiet and stately rapture, and to a statue of Coatlicue, the earth goddess, with her wondrous and terrifying death's head and skirt of living, squirming serpents. He was awestruck by the spirits, in a state of knowing and wonder, lightening his consciousness, when another tour group walked through. "On your left," intoned the tour guide, "is a diablo." The tourists glanced at the stone statue. "We don't really know what it means."



"XOCHIPILLI is the depiction of a being undergoing a psychedelic experience," says LordNose!. "It's a knowing that was absolutely reinforced by my being in an altered state with him. He was imbued with a spirit, a spirit manifest. I knew full well that these were not just artistic treasures, but spiritual treasures."

While awaiting permission to photograph Xochipilli, LordNose! and his friend went out to wander amongst the buildings and murals of Mexico City's Zocalo district. In the patio of a huge building, the Secretariat of Public Education, they came upon frescoes of Mexico's history, painted by Diego Rivera between 1923 and 1927. Tucked away in the stairwell leading to the second floor was a jungle scene depicting Xochipilli, perched on top of a giant mushroom cap, surrounded by four naked Indian maidens!

Delighted at finding Rivera's Xochipilli, they were astonished to see him with the mushroom. "Diego Rivera must have understood the significance of the statue, and chose, like the Aztecs, to emphasize that meaning in his art as well," says LordNose!.

"Great artists do not choose their subjects arbitrarily."

Much of it is difficult to explain, simply because we have so few words to describe experiences outside our consensus reality.

That came as something of a surprise. Wasson is widely credited as being the first gringo to discover "magic" mushrooms, aided by the shaman Maria Sabina in 1955, and to describe the psychedelic meaning of Xochipilli. However, Rivera must have known about "magic" mushrooms in the 1920s. Dr. Blas Pablo Reko, an Austrian anthropologist working in Mexico, wrote about hallucinogenic mushrooms in the 1920s, but was widely discredited. Reko and Rivera traveled in the same circles, though, and it seems highly unlikely that Rivera didn't taste the "flesh of the gods."

More striking to LordNose! than his discovery was the idea of how the psychedelic vision might have infused Rivera's work. It may help explain, he says, the magical spatial feeling of Rivera's work, where a vast array of elements are harmoniously composed. As an artist, he says, he has seen how psychedelics can define magical spaces, confronting the mind



Plants of the Gods

with a multitude of views simultaneously. So too can they help open an "inner eye" that expands an artist's vision. For LordNose!, both the ancient Xochipilli and Rivera's interpretation of him were inspirations.

He and his friend returned across the border to create a Xochipilli of their own, as a vehicle through which to present information about psychedelics. They decided to re-create Xochipilli in a modern image, via computer. They wanted to use the latest technology to depict this ancient deity, giving Xochipilli an electronic feel, reinterpreting him in a completely new artistic medium and a transfigured reality.

They decided to display Xochipilli on a poster, together with concise, up-to-date scientific information on a dozen compounds, each represented by a "3-D" rendering of its structure. These energy-minimized molecular models were created by Drs. David Nichols and Robert Pfaff, medicinal chemists at Purdue University. They are "flowers" created by computer, not carved in stone. In that way, they integrate the ancient meaning of Xochipilli into a modern context.

Everything about their Xochipilli was created from new material. They started by scanning LordNose!'s 8"x10" black-and-white photo of Xochipilli into a Silicon Graphics Personal Iris, then filtered the image through a sequence of visual filters, manipulating the incoming data so that the picture elements were transformed into new, odd-sized shapes instead of uniform dots. "We pushed the machine to create something we couldn't do any other way," says LordNose!. "We wanted to create something unique. We didn't want to give the computer a



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is itself "something nonordinary."

Accompanying the poster will be a 16-page booklet, "A Guide to the Psychedelics," which contains background information that wouldn't fit on a 24"x36" poster format. It includes descriptions of what psychedelics do for the mind, soul, and body politic; sections on psychedelics, taxonomy, set and setting, routes of administration, side effects, urine testing, nutritional support; and other topics. Also included are bibliographies of popular and scientific resources for some of what we've learned about psychedelics since Aztec times. ☺

The "Xochi Speaks" poster and "A Guide to the Psychedelics" are available for \$25 postpaid (Californians please add local tax), or \$30 foreign, from LordNose!, P. O. Box 170473, San Francisco, CA 94117-0473. For a preview, see our back cover.

Flesh of the Gods

simple command and use predigested material."

The imagery was exported to a Macintosh, so as to take advantage of all available software. Using PhotoShop, Xochipilli was extracted from his museum setting and placed onto a night-sky background. Accurate placement of the imagery was not possible on the small-screen Macintosh, due to the large poster size (24"x36") — so they did everything in pieces. For increased text legibility, they modified an existing typeface and set the type using PageMaker. All this electronic data was then combined on a Scitex workstation by Repro-Media of San Francisco, generating color-separated film ready for the lithographer. The process, which probably would have taken a month using "traditional" mechanical methods, took more like ten months because of the advanced technology and learning involved. It was a way of creating original art, in homage to a deity, using new tools. The result, as LordNose! says,

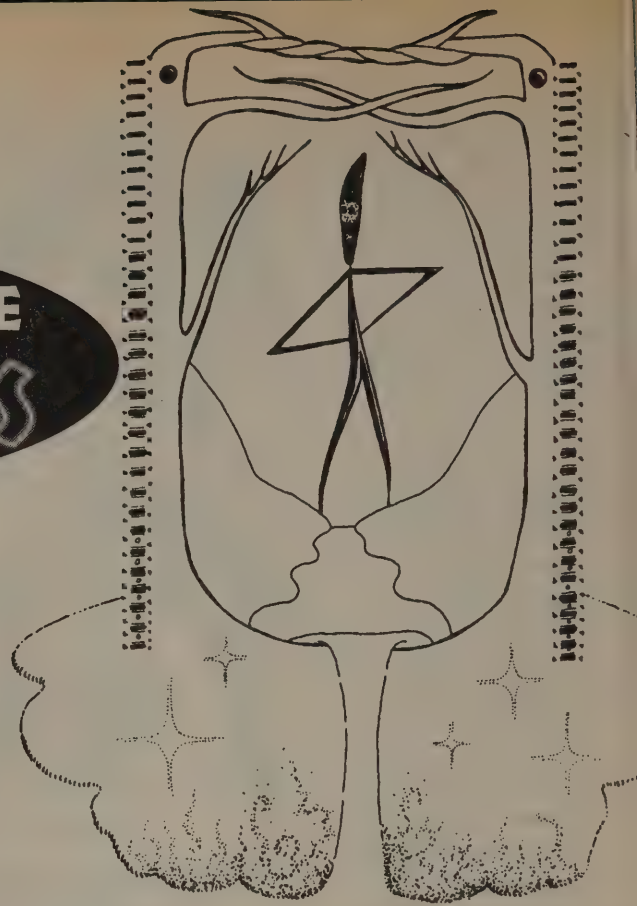
THE RETURN OF THE PEYOTEROS

BY BRET BLOSSER

THE CEREMONIAL USE OF psychoactive plants played a major role in the religious life of a great many Mesoamerican societies at the time of contact. The Spanish succeeded in eradicating the practice virtually everywhere they encountered it.

Despite this persecution, the ritual use of entheogens did survive in the covert healing ceremonies of village shamans in a few locations in the highlands of Oaxaca, Mexico. The public ceremonial use of entheogens, however, faded. Many communities met their need for a sacrament which provided a profoundly altered state of being for participants in public, community-wide, multi-day ceremonies: they substituted the distilled spirits that the Spanish had introduced for their proscribed sacred plants. Observing the mastery of Tzeltal religious leaders on cane liquor in the highlands of Chiapas, one cannot help but speculate about the skill with which their ancestors might once have woven plant-inspired illumination into the fabric of community religious life.

This ancient thread of Mesoamerican life is not entirely lost. A few small Huichol communities in the rugged Sierra Madre Occidental of northwestern Mexico continue to practice the peyote-based religion of their ancestors.



Illustrations by Kathleen Harrison McKenna

Nineteen years ago, Bret Blosser showed up at my house and said he could get me into a Grand Canyon rafting trip if I could be ready to leave the next morning. On the way to Arizona, Bret and I stopped outside Palm Springs at the home of Ruby Modesto, a shaman of the Cahuilla tribe. Her house was a small cinderblock tract home on the site of her grandparents' more traditional Cahuilla dwelling. She was an enormously engaging woman, full of questions about the world outside, full of stories about her world, thirsty for knowledge about anything and everything. She had never traveled further than 50 miles from her home, but her mind roamed the cosmos, and she extracted news from visitors as if the information were a precious nectar. A walk through the desert with her transformed an apparently quiet, nearly desolate place into a magical realm, teeming with life and full of good and evil powers.

After that trip, Blosser wrote up his field notes from several visits with Ruby Modesto; those notes were published in

I was recently invited to attend the fiesta of the return of the *peyoteros* (peyote pilgrims) at one of the more traditional Huichol ceremonial centers. Thirty-three *peyoteros*, wearing dazzling outfits and carrying their basket backpacks, blankets, water bottles, and feathered ritual instruments, formed a reception line in the plaza. They had the journey-worn but proud bearing of people who have traveled far, accomplished much, and returned with the gold. It appeared to me that the gold was not just peyote, but also the deep connection which they had made on behalf of their community with the Sun, the Blue Deer, the Rain Mothers, and the other deities. Everyone over the age of about thirteen went down the reception line greeting the *peyoteros* and receiving a slice of fresh cactus from each one. This was the beginning of three days and two nights of continuous ceremonial activity which included rituals, prayers, offerings made in temples, music, dance, and clowning.

For the most part I stayed in the background, but at one point one of the lead *peyoteros* called me over. "Do you like peyote?" "Yes." He motioned

me to join in. I followed community members down a line of *peyoteros*. We knelt in front of, but facing away from, each one. Each *peyotero* in turn gave us a candle to hold, dabbed holy water from the peyote desert on the tops of our heads, and offered us flowers dripping with holy water to suck. We took slices of peyote from each *peyotero's* bowl.

In the early afternoon the *peyoteros* filed out of the ceremonial center, led by musicians playing a lilting tune on a tiny fiddle and a tiny guitar. In their feathered hats and brilliant clothes they wound up the switchbacks of the trail that climbs the steep and rocky bluff. Then came the sound of an axe, of a tree falling, of more chopping, and finally the blare of the *peyoteros'* cowhorn trumpets. A group of men and boys, with two older women, hurried out on the same trail with musicians in the lead. I knew by the ropes the men and boys carried that they were going to help carry firewood. "Would it be OK for me to go along and help?" "Yes, come on, lots of us are going because there will be peyote." We found the *peyoteros* seated on the rocky hillside in pleasant

sunshine, surrounded by oak trees. I noticed that many of the firewood helpers wore oak leaves in their hats. A couple of the *peyoteros* were standing, facing the sun, holding their *muvieries* (feathered wands), and praying intensely and continuously. Bright yellow patterns, painted with a paste derived from a desert root, lit up the *peyoteros'* cheeks. Some of our party set to work dropping trees and limbs and chopping

the first issue of *CoEvolution Quarterly* (Spring 1974): "Southwest American Indian Medicine."

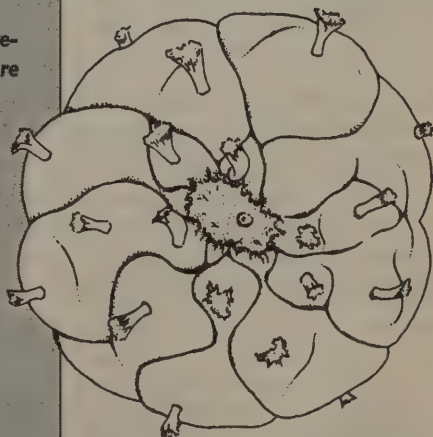
Ruby Modesto has since died. Blosser's latest article, reprinted here, was published in *Plantwise*, Issue #5 (\$20/4 issues from Botanical Dimensions, P. O. Box 807, Occidental, CA 95465).

Bret Blosser has been a river guide and field ethnobotanist ever since he left Reed College, where I first met him in 1968. Ruby Modesto was only the first of many teachers. In the off-season for North American river touring, he explores Mazatec caves (the southern Mexican village of Huautla de Jimenez, the spiritual capital of the mushroom religion, sits atop the largest limestone cave complex in the Western Hemisphere). He also wanders by foot and kayak through Mayan country in Mexico, Belize, and Guatemala, and, via floatplane and weeks of walking, through the Ecuadorian Amazon. With Rob Montgomery, he conducts college-accredited field training for Botanical Preservation Corps volunteers (WER

#64). It's no wonder that the Huichols sensed a kindred spirit in the gringo with the far-focused sky-blue eyes who wandered into one of their most sacred ceremonial festivals.

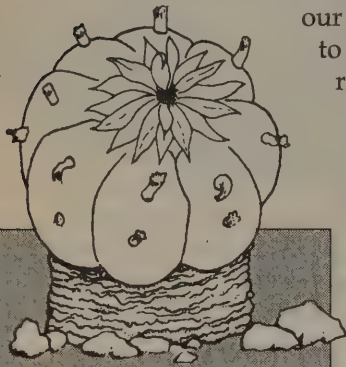
As Laura Fraser points out in "Xochipilli: A Context For Ecstasy" (p. 38), Western civilization, plagued by drug abuse, has no sense of religious context for psychoactive ecstasy. The importance of the Huichols' culture to all humanity lies in their spiritual ties to their land and the plants that grow there — in the context they have created to frame their ecstasy. These are deeply religious people. Their festivals are celebrations of spiritual illumination, not profane intoxication. The Huichol know something about how to live in their neighborhood — the Sierra, the planet Earth, the Universe — and what they know is intimately related to their close relationship with *Lophophora williamsii*, the peyote cactus.

—Howard Rheingold



them into lengths. A boy of about thirteen scrambled high into an oak and skillfully cut a limb. Hoots of approval. A robust young man danced backwards across boulders when the trunk he was working on rolled after him. Yells and laughter. The intense praying continued for the hour or

more that it took us to ready our loads. Then came a call to receive peyote. We hurried across boulders to a pile of fresh slices two feet across. "Make your tacos!" and "Head tacos!" joked the peyoteros. Some of the young men came away with big handfuls of juicy cactus. Yellow designs danced across the peyoteros' cheeks. I got the impression that the peyoteros were deeply identified with the abundant energy of sun, oak, and fire. The men hoisted their bundles onto their backs and followed the procession down the trail. The two women and I carried firewood in our arms. We added our wood to the large supply by the kiva-like community temple, picked up a dry stick from the supply, and descended into the temple.



The group represents the whole community in the realm of the gods and functions as a school of religious studies in which the older peyoteros initiate and guide the younger ones.

I was unprepared for the charged atmosphere of the packed chamber. Stunned, I followed the two women around the central column of flame. Oceanic energy surged and hummed in the darkness and firelight. I laid my stick on the fire, took note of a round stone with a central hole which I realized must mark the sipapu-like entrance to the underworld, and headed up the steps and out.



THE SURVIVAL OF PEYOTE RELIGION in Huichol communities is a remarkable achievement of cultural protection. What are the prospects for Huichol

cultural integrity in the face of accelerating pressure from the mainstream culture on the Huichol Sierra? One hopeful sign is the dedication of the many teenage peyoteros (and non-peyotero teenage community members) to the tradition. They clearly found the ways of their ancestors to be the hottest game in town, and were intent on picking up the intricacies of the tradition their elders were laying out. I was also encouraged to learn that the region's most successful Mexican-style Huichol entrepreneur, a truck and store operator, was to become a peyotero in the next cycle.

The teenage peyoteros and the store owner are not just participating in colorful psychoactive festivities. Peyoteros "sign on" as a group for five-year periods of religious obligation that require them to reside in the ceremonial center for months at a time, to participate in numerous difficult pilgrimages, and to maintain close relationships with demanding deities. The group represents the whole community in the realm of the gods and functions as a school of religious studies in which the older peyoteros initiate and guide the younger ones.

Despite this vigor, the survival of Huichol culture is very much in question. Logging companies, with government help, are pushing new roads far into the Huichol Sierra and have begun to cut the forests. The Mexican government is threatening to open all communal landholdings to private titling and sale to outside interests. Many Huichol have begun to seek power, wealth, and identity outside their tradition.

The traditional Huichol communities need allies in their struggle to evolve in ways that maintain their cultural integrity. Providing such support is tricky; aid projects are often based on good ideas which do not make sense to the people they are meant to help.

The Huichol I visited have begun two efforts which they feel will contribute to the well-being of the whole community. About \$6,000 is needed over the next three years to support the university education of a woman who will become the first Huichol physician. About \$2,000 a year is needed for one full-time salary and materials for a fruit-tree nursery and orchard project. Please consider contributing financial support to these efforts. Contact Bret Blosser at Box 781, Moab, UT 84532 for more information. Please send tax-deductible contributions to Friends of the Huichol, c/o George Howell, 157 Hillside Avenue, Arlington, MA 02174. ☺

Earth in the Balance

Senator Al Gore's new book should be a cherished contribution to the literature of ecology and spirituality. **Earth in the Balance** is the most complete and accessible introduction to global ecological problems I have read. Sadly, it is already a little out of date (it speaks only of the future possibility of an ozone-hole over the Arctic).

The most remarkable part of the book is its spiritual statement. In a small number of pages, Gore explains and integrates a huge number of personal insights, scientific ideas, and ideas from the world's religions and philosophies into a mainstream American context.

Finally, the book proposes a specific Global Marshall Plan for saving the planet — a comprehensive proposal from a man in the rare position to speak about politics and power as an insider. Gore has been involved in arms control and other foreign-policy matters for years, and has earned credibility as a pragmatist.

State of the World 1992

Just a reminder that reading this annual (since 1984) report from the front lines has long been one of the best ways to keep up with progress (and lack thereof) toward a sustainable society. Often grim, rarely whiny, and never sappy-simple, the collection of annotated articles outlines what you need to know in order to act in an informed, effective manner. You can often see trends — and where your efforts will do the most good — becoming obvious here years before recognition by academia and the conventional press, let alone Mr. & Mrs. Fronte Porch.

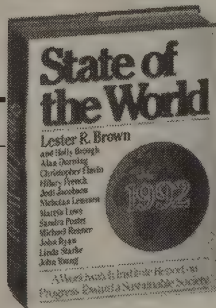
—J. Baldwin

Why are mineral prices so low? One reason is that many nations subsidize development of their domestic mineral resources. Since the twenties, for example, the United States has offered mining companies generous tax exemptions called depletion allowances. Miners can deduct from 5 to 22 percent of their gross income, depending on the mineral. Unlike conventional depreciation, depletion allowances are not based on capital investments made by the company. In fact, the allowances may be taken for as long as the mine operates — even after the company's investment is fully recovered. In addition, mining companies may also deduct much of the cost of exploring for and developing mineral deposits.

The lost taxes added up to a \$5-billion subsidy to the U.S. mining industry over the last decade. The President's budget projects

Gore shows not a trace of the liberal/conservative dichotomy. Nor a trace of the rational/spiritual dichotomy. Here is a vision of what American political dialog could be like in a future where we survive. —Jaron Lanier

The chemicals destroying the ozone layer, chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), are odorless, tasteless, and colorless. In other words, as far as our unaided senses are concerned, they don't exist. Similarly, the extra concentrations of CO₂ in the atmosphere that have accumulated during the last several decades are invisible unless we use sophisticated means of measuring them. Moreover, the infrared waves that are the particular kind of solar radiation trapped by the extra CO₂ and the CFCs, are in that part of the spectrum that is invisible to the human eye. Indeed, part of our difficulty in responding to the ecological crisis is that its symptoms are not yet setting off alarms that we can



State of the World 1992

Lester R. Brown, et al., 1992; 256 pp.

\$10.95 postpaid from W. W. Norton & Co./Order Dept., 800 Keystone Industrial Park, Scranton, PA 18512; 800/233-4830 (or Whole Earth Access)

that the 1992 subsidy will be \$560 million.

The overall job gains are still likely to outweigh the losses, however. A 1986 West German study, for instance, showed that although increasing the share of throwaway beverage containers from 15 percent to 90 percent would create an additional 15,000-20,000 jobs, the implied abandonment of reusable and recyclable bottles would at the same time cause the loss of 90,000 jobs. Thus the fledgling recycling industry has already become an important employer — and offers the potential for many more jobs in the future.

It is worth remembering that less than 10,000 years ago volcanoes were erupting in what is now central France, that the English Channel did not exist 7,000 years ago, and that much of the Sahara was fertile just 5,000 years ago. Only a clairvoyant could choose an inviolable, permanent hiding place for the twentieth century's nuclear legacy.



Earth in the Balance

Al Gore, 1992; 408 pp.

\$22.95 (\$25.45 postpaid) from Houghton Mifflin Company/Mail Order Dept., Wayside Road, Burlington, MA 01803; 800/225-3362 (or Whole Earth Access)

sense directly through hearing, tasting, seeing, smelling, or touching. Over the past few years, many people have noticed that the summers seem hotter and the droughts longer; if this apparently direct evidence of global warming is causing people to take the problem more seriously, how much more urgent the crisis would seem if we could taste CFCs or see CO₂!

Frequently, people who read about an event or idea in the newspaper come away with wildly different impressions from those of people who watched the same event or idea on the evening news. Each medium tends to create its own way of thinking, and each tends to frustrate the other. In the process, the country as a whole seems unable to define our objectives, much less move coherently toward them.

In a different context, the writer Octavio Paz once observed that, in his opinion, India's seeming social paralysis results in part from the coexistence of the world's most rigidly monotheistic religious system, Islam, and the world's most elaborately pantheistic religion, Hinduism. In the same way, I wonder whether America's political paralysis might stem in part from the coexistence of two powerful but clashing media for communicating political thought.

It is my own belief that the image of God can be seen in every corner of creation, even in us, but only faintly. By gathering in the mind's eye all of creation, one can perceive the image of the Creator vividly. Indeed, my understanding of how God is manifest in the world can be best conveyed through the metaphor of the hologram, which I mentioned in the introduction. (Using a technological metaphor to make a spiritual point is not as odd as it may seem. The Bible often uses metaphors based on the technology of the time. For example, God scatters spiritual seeds on the barren land as well as the rich soil, some of them grow and some of them don't; the wheat must be separated from the tares; at the end of time men shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.)

Dancing THE GOD'S EYE Through

Huichol Art and Culture

BY MARIA
VON
BOLSCHWING



The von Bolschwing Collection

Getting to the Huichol homelands requires maneuvering up and down glass mountains and living on the edge; Maria von Bolschwing does it to bring art supplies to her friends. In return, they afford her passage into the realms of spiritual x-ray vision and magical interaction portrayed in their luminous artwork. The pilgrimage Bret Blosser talks about in "Return of the Peyoteros" (p. 44) has a poignant sequel: Maria told us that fences and other impedimenta of private property have forced the Huichols she knows to accept car rides around obstacles on their path to the sacred peyote gathering places. Here, Maria talks about Huichol art from the inside, in this excerpt from *Hola Amigos!*, a newspaper of Yelapa, the seaside town in Mexico where she maintains the Huichol Art Center. —Robin Bishop



IGH IN THE MOUNTAINS OF WESTERN MEXICO, approximately 10,000 Huichol Indians live a lifestyle closer to pre-Columbian times than that of any other people on this continent. Protected by their wild terrain, they never fell subject to invading Spaniards. Long after signing a treaty with the Mexican government, they continued to resist acculturation. Only recently have airstrips and roads given access to a tribe still strikingly similar to that described in 1898 by one of the first anthropologists in the Sierra Madre, Carl Lumholtz.

How exactly has this group survived with its original tribal structure, religion, and art intact? The Huichols are a tribe of shamans; it is said that over half of them take up this way of life. Because so much of Huichol art stems from this strong shamanic tradition, it is important to place it in a wider panhuman perspective. This art is prayer; not art for art's sake, it is art for all's sake.

In this society, shamans are the consummate artists, the specialists in their traditional religious system. They know how to tap the metaphysical world, seeing it as a reservoir of power from which the artist can envision, translate, and create designs. Such shamanic art provides a vital link to our Paleolithic past; many ancient tools and keys are disappearing before we can rediscover from them how to reconnect with the forces underlying our planet.

Bob Masa, in his *Healing Art of the Huichol Indians*, posits that the very name "Huichol" means "Feather Healing People," and explains a healing process they use to achieve a life of balance.

First, one must work to heal the Self. Beginning with the heart, one must undergo a fine-tuning of all aspects of the soul. Secondly, one works to heal one's immediate circle of family, friends and neighbors, something traditionally made easier through the customary use of *hikuri* (peyote), which brings people to much the same vibrational state while experiencing everything from storytelling to pilgrimage. Thirdly, the Huichols concern themselves with the wider concept of healing the Earth Mother. In all three stages, it is the shaman who leads the way.

Feathers, which are the heart of God, are the shaman's power and his instrument of communication with the Gods. Shamans all have their own sacred baskets containing feathers, arrows and mirrors.

In Western social systems, we tend to have institutionalized specialists who transmit art and information from one generation to another without explicit recourse to the supernatural. We have only recently come back to the recognition of psychic forces as underpinning factors in our lives. In contrast, the shamanic art encodes and channels sacred psychic knowledge; and it is this consciousness of the intricate balance between physical and metaphysical phenomena which makes of the finest Huichol art talismans that can help restore the magical connections to our lives.

Huichol sacred art is both mystical and communal. Every Huichol adult is an artist. As children, men learn how to do beadwork and make votive paraphernalia, while the women weave and embroider. In marked contrast with Western art (perhaps the most individualized aspect of our civilization), what the Huichols do functions as a mystical vehicle through which their collective sacred knowledge is passed on. They firmly believe, furthermore, that if one of their *cantadors*, or singing shamans, alters any of their oral literature or mythology, disaster will follow at once. This belief prevents the sacred knowledge from being diluted or altered.

Whereas specialization in Western art reduces participation to mere looking or passive listening, art for the Huichols is a living thing that they experience directly. Their young need no schools, for their education occurs naturally as they participate in daily activities and in the sacred cer-



Whereas specialization in Western art reduces participation to mere looking or passive listening, art for the Huichols is a living thing that they experience directly.

emonies. These ceremonies enable the Huichols to take part in the re-creation of mythical events of the earliest times. The script of their sacred drama is their unwritten mythology, and the plots reenact such things as the first pilgrimage to the homeland of the gods. Such mystical participation enables the actors to become their gods.

As individuals, therefore, the Huichols take responsibility for the creation of their own realities. This attitude leads to a remarkable tolerance of individual behavior. Rarely will a mother, even one who has already lost children to the cliffs, warn them to stay away from dangerous ledges. Neither will Huichols attempt to dissuade others from committing suicide. Such things are considered to be a matter of choice. In much the same way, it is accepted that each family will take care of itself; charity in the mestizo sense is virtually unknown.

Such extreme pride and passion for freedom make it all the more important to know how to connect with and affect the gods. Although such use of "magic" can be a life-and-death affair, the Huichol word for "work" is the same as their word for "dance," considering the latter to be a mystical form of work as vital to the growth of corn as the weeding of the fields.

Huichols love to dance, and also to listen to Mexican or even rock music on their prized portable radios. Most Huichol men play crude violins and guitars of obvious European antecedent, but their "serious" music is the chanting of the sacred myths. As the *cantador* chants, sporadically joined by others, the altar must be watched and the chanting listened to attentively all night, lest disaster follow.

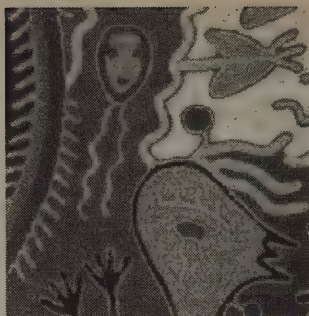
Huichol mythology can be arranged in three major cycles: the dry season, the wet season, and the Christian cycle (which represents the assimilation of missionary teachings into the earlier myths). In the reenactment of these dramatic cycles, the gods are portrayed as personifications of natural phenomena. In this philosophy,

attempts are made to assemble the universe into order through a mystical mythology that inclines the gods to act as the people wish them to. The sacred paraphernalia with which this past is achieved are the tribe's symbolic art and the collective oral tradition, never to be tampered with lest the miracle requested not happen. Should any individual vary from the spiritual norm, the entire group would be jeopardized. The morale of the group is reinforced by the shaman, and this is what has held them together for so long against outside influence.

At the Parched Corn Ceremony, which I was invited to experience in May 1989, we were repeatedly aroused at the first sign of drowsiness, prodded to get up and dance, and to slap our sandals on the ground so that the gods would hear our prayers. Sometimes the half-circle of men around the shaman would join in the chanting; at other times the violins would pick up and we would all dance enthusiastically. At one such interval, we were led in a circular step by a male dancer wearing a deerskin about his shoulders. Everyone imitated the graceful running of the deer; there was much friendly laughter at my ineptitude and the way I kept bumping my head on the low-hanging mango branches. Toward dawn, two of my women friends called me to link arms with them and dance as the sun rose. This is the traditional way women dance to purify the corn and make it edible, along with the actual parching of corn kernels on the brazier by a woman wearing the shaman's plume of eagle feathers.

Just as wet-season dancing honors the Rain Goddess and precedes the corn planting, in October the male gods are invoked to provide enough sun to harvest the corn. The Huichol pantheon gives equal credit to female and male deities.

Huichol women participate fully in the shamanistic traditions of the tribe, largely through their embroidery — dense, diamantine designs called *punta de oro* (points of gold). Women



Yarn paintings often depict mystical states in much the same way as the stained glass of medieval cathedrals did.

adept at this artistic/mathematical blending of color and form are known as “women who have completed themselves.” A woman who has traveled to a certain depth within herself on peyote comes to the realization that she is experiencing her own genetic patterns. The designs apparently pass on vital information that is part of the group's genetic pool. The difficult shamanic “trick” is to return from that vision of All-That-Is with one of the myriad “life patterns” (of which most of us are unaware) that flow through the body at all times. The process is rather like bringing the treasure of light from darkness, as did Tatwari, Our Grandmother Fire, the first shaman. *Punta-de-oro* embroidery makes the most prized carrying bags, and blessed is the man who can proudly wear the wisdom and artistry of his wife for all to see.

Beadwork is another major art form; Huichols call anything made of beads *kuka*, or “beauty.” Long before the Spanish Conquest, the Indians had perfected the art of beadwork using bone, clay, stone, shell, coral, turquoise, pyrite, and jade. Beads were colored with vegetable or insect dyes

and the colors combined into shapes from nature and geometric designs.

Beads also have ritual uses. Prayer bowls, or *jicaras*, are seen in Huichol ceremonies and on the permanent altars in their God-houses. Highly sacred because of their ability to communicate directly with the gods, these gourds have colored beads artistically arranged to express innermost wishes. It is believed that the gods thus addressed will drink their prayers from the bowls.

Patterns placed upon the dried gourds represent such requests as a successful hunt, plentiful crops, or health for an individual or family. Most are requests for abundance. Sometimes the bowls depict little household gods waving prayer feathers; in others the bowl is made as a mirror of one of the states of God, most frequently seen as the trilogy — deer, corn, peyote.

Perhaps the best-known form of Huichol art is yarn painting. Deriving from small beaded wooden *tablas* (little tablets) which were left as offerings, yarn replaced more expensive beads about fifty years ago. Both yarn and beads are purchased by Huichol traders venturing down into the cities.

Huichols' use of bright colors is influenced by the rainbow-like auras they see while on peyote; most painters prefer to use subtly vibrant colors. American artist Christopher Moses, who has incorporated some of their color schemes into his paintings, maintains that Huichol knowledge of the spectrum is very finely tuned. Well aware of which juxtapositions create the illusions of other shades, they achieve precise effects akin to “op-art.”

Each color has a symbolic meaning. Red and orange relate to sun and fire, blues and greens relate to water and rain. Eligio Carrillo, a well-known Huichol artist, once explained how, during the creation of one of his larger works, he had become “drunk with the colors of the gods.” As with tantric art, the ritual use of color adds a rich dimension of mood.



Yarn paintings are made from boards spread with beeswax or pine resin, into which the yarn is pressed. Although methods differ, very few yarn painters first cut an outline into the wax, preferring to work as their intuition tells them. Some begin in one corner and spread outward. Others fill in the edges and work inward toward the center (very difficult). Still others press on outlines in one strong color and fill in the rest later.

In early yarn paintings, things look markedly cellular, serving to remind how the interior visions brought on by the cactus go far beyond the sight afforded by the physical eye. Yarn paintings often depict mystical states in much the same way as the stained glass of medieval cathedrals did. At their most sacred, such yarn paintings fulfill the requirements of being *nierikas*. *Nierikas* can be defined as cosmic holes through which the gods emerge to pass from one plane to another; they serve as likenesses or mirrors of godlike states of being. They are a form of creative visualization,

of sympathetic magic which obliges the gods to respond.

In this era of significant change for the Huichols, when traditional ways are threatened with breakdown, it is heartening to find so many artists still at work, with techniques that can be traced back to the feather mosaics of the Mixtecs and Aztecs. Modern *nierikas* continue to pass on energy from one plane of the universe to another; like seeds sown by the artist, they germinate in our consciousness and the magic connects us to the source. Such art serves to remind us of the fusion with natural forces we have lost. Yet perhaps one day soon, all that will be left of this complex link to our paleolithic past will be memories and artifacts in the hands of museums and collectors.

The finest Huichol art is now as endangered as the shamanistic lifestyle that creates it. The Mexican government is making every attempt to integrate the Huichols with the mainstream. Roads, schools, clinics, airstrips, and lumber mills are rapidly

bringing about the disintegration of traditional ways.

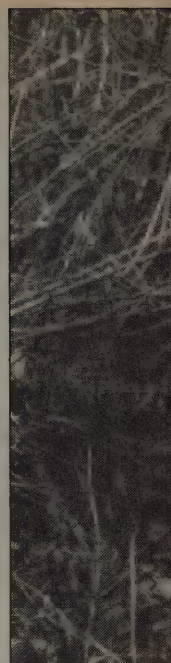
Suddenly the Huichols find themselves constantly needing money to survive. They not only need cash for land taxes, but for modern medicines, beads and yarn for their votive crafts, and transport money for pilgrimages formerly made on foot, not to mention food and seeds. With no other resources than the stony, drought-ridden land, the Huichols are forced down to coastal sugar factories and tobacco plants where they are exploited as cheap labor. Once they leave the protection of their homelands, they fall prey not only to the ridicule and violence of mestizos' attitudes toward "Indios," but to diseases against which they have no immunity. Uprooted, they can no longer participate in the ceremonies that connect them to their land, their well-being, and their shamans, which in turn disconnects them from their gods. The shamans, once at the heart of Huichol life, find themselves losing control and credibility.

What can be done? In 1983 the Huichol Art Center was established to help preserve and assist the Huichol community by helping Huichol artists create, repair, and market their goods. The Center also provides food and shelter for those needing to recuperate from illness or crop failure, and art materials and contact with artists from the outside world. This community center offers feasible economic alternatives to debilitating migrant work. The Huichol Art Center is supported by private donation and the sale of Huichol art. ❁

For more information about the Huichol Art Center and Maria von Bolschwing's work with the Huichols, or to send a donation, contact the Huichol Art Center at P. O. Box 637, Sausalito, CA 94965; 415/331-3621.

For a copy of *Hola Amigos!*, send \$2.50 to Chris Moses, Editor, *Hola Amigos!*, 1220 South Hull Street, Montgomery, AL 36104.

An excellent reference: *Art of the Huichol Indians*, by Lowell J. Bean, Sylvia B. Vane, and Kathleen Berrin (1978). \$21.95 postpaid from Museum Stores/M. H. De Young Memorial Museum, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA 94118; 415/750-3642.



BELIZE, the smallest nation in Central America, has about 200,000 inhabitants of Maya, Ladino, Garifuna, East Indian, Mennonite, and English descent. During a visit in 1987, I heard about an American woman, a healer, who lived in the jungle in western Belize. The woman — Rosita Arvigo — was the apprentice of Don Eligio Panti, Belize's most respected Maya healer and a lonely old man living in the Maya village of San Antonio along the Macal River. Word had it that thousands of people were coming to see her from all over the Americas and Europe. So, on my last trip, I arranged to meet her in the town of San Ignacio, in the Cayo District. The following is based on my journal.

MAYAN MEDICINE

Lunch With Rosita Arvigo, Shaman From Chicago

BY NADINE EPSTEIN

Ethnobotany is a hot topic these days in the mass media, and that's a good thing. As chunks of priceless biomass disappear under bulldozer blades or go up in flames, and cultural traditions that transmit specific knowledge of plant properties die of genocide and modern civilization, the ethnobotanist has emerged from the mists of academia to assume a neomythical status.

Terence McKenna swashbuckles into the remotest Amazon to obtain the secrets of mind-manifesting potions. Sean Connery stars as "Medicine Man," who finds the cure for cancer, and loses it, in the rainforests. Time Magazine devoted a cover in 1991 to the vanishing knowledge. James Bond, eco-warrior.

Attention is energy, and media myths can attract people's attention to the fact that the most widely used medicine for juvenile leukemia was derived from a Madagascar shaman's potion, and that even more valuable medicines might be out there, in a bark, or root, or spore of a species that will become extinct today.

Preserving the plants, and the cultures of people who know how to use them, is only part of the urgent work to be done. Healers need apprentices. The knowledge of how to use attention, language, plant medicine, and a sense of the local spiritual community to promote healing is something that can't be derived from a book. Plant healing is an oral tradition; plant healers accept apprentices and appoint successors after years and decades of personal training. And it isn't the kind of training that an outsider could or ought to jump into, learn, and take away. It's a lifetime commitment to a place and a group of people.

Chicago-born Rosita Arvigo is an exception. Nadine Epstein traveled to Belize twice to interview her. Epstein, who created the "Goddess Is Alive" art for the cover of WER #74, is a writer, artist, and photographer in Washington, DC.

—Howard Rheingold



Don Eligio, Mayan healer, and his apprentice, Rosita Arvigo.

I AWOKE EARLY TO A CACOPHONY of bird whistles and monkey howls, the jungle down the road shrieking distantly. As I walked into town from the hotel, the sun already hung hot over the Macal.

At Eva's restaurant, a tall, striking woman strode in. Persian and Italian blood conspired to make her look like a dark, deep-eyed madonna, not so much beautiful as astonishingly alive. Rosita Arvigo had her black hair cut short; she was dressed in a simple white blouse and print skirt. Her daughter, Crystal, long-legged, blonde, and looking as American as they come, giggled sweetly behind her.

"Mom, Mom, can I go shopping while you talk — please?" Crystal asked.

"Sure, honey, but just for a few minutes," responded Rosita. The girl was gone in a flash.

Rosita and I introduced ourselves as a pale British private ordered eggs at the next table. I'm a writer and artist. She's a Maya healer, a holistic nature-cure doctor, an herbalist, a doctor of naprapathy, and a diet therapist running the Ix Chel Farm and Tropical Research Center in Belize. Her words have a no-nonsense, street-smart American ring to them. She talks like she's from the north side of Chicago, which she is.

"How did you become a Maya healer?" I had to ask right away.

"Why don't you come home with us for lunch and I'll tell you the story," said Rosita. This meant gathering a few supplies in the market, collecting Crystal and climbing down to a muddy spot

along the Macal. We boarded the 10:30 commuter dugout. The canoe was crowded with Maya villagers and bags of food. Mr. Green revved up the motor and we headed upriver. Along the banks, lush and wild, I occasionally caught glimpses of thatched-hut villages. Mr. Green pushed with a pole to get us over rocky shallows.

An hour and fifteen minutes later we clambered up a steep bank and the jungle parted on a lovely homestead, *Ix Chel*, named for the Maya goddess of healing. A cluster of white stucco buildings with tall, graceful, thatched-palm roofs stood among flowers, herbs and giant pineapple stalks.

Rosita and I went into the kitchen "house" — spacious, spotless and comfortably furnished — and began to slice cucumbers.

"In 1983, I wanted to learn the local medicinal plants to include them in our healing practices," Rosita explained as she chopped. "Everyone said to go see Numero Uno. Don Eligio. He's more than a curandero. He's the *H'man* — which in Mayan means healer-priest. He's the one who knows," she said as she started on leafy greens. "He treats both physical and spiritual ills and does divination. He's a shaman. So I went and asked if he'd teach me. He said no.

"Don Eligio had tried to teach several male relatives before but they had not maintained interest," Rosita continued. "This is what's happening all over Central America: the young generation is not interested. There are fewer and fewer apprentices. The old ways are being lost.



Tom Ives

Rosita Arvigo and her daughter, Crystal, en route to Ix Chel, traditional Mayan medical center.

"It took a year for me to gain his confidence, a year of being his daughter, his confidante, making myself useful. Then he realized that at the age of 85 he had no other student. It fell to me by default. He did *not* want to teach a foreigner. He felt that all would be lost if I left. I had to promise two things: that I'd practice and not leave his people with no one to do this work, and that I would not leave Belize."

Her apprenticeship lasted five years and ended in 1988. "Don Eligio says I'm graduated now," she says with a broad smile. "I always thought it was a little like medical school, one teacher, one student, and the field was our laboratory. Little houses were our clinic and hospital."

She and Don Eligio, now in his nineties, remain close. She gathers his plants and acts as his clinical assistant. "I make his amulets, powders, herbal remedies. I'm his pharmacy for his clinic and hospital in San Antonio. I'm also his doctor; I kidnap him for a few days at a time, the only way to make him rest." He's lonely and depressed since his wife died. She tries to keep his spirits up.

"What I've learned from the Maya is that it is unnatural to separate the spiritual and physical," Rosita continued. "The Maya have a medical religious system. The spiritual and physical life are separated only by a gossamer veil; life is a con-

tinuum. It's a very spiritual healing process."

The medicine Rosita learned from Don Eligio is not the same as the medicine practiced during the Classic Maya period (300 AD - 900 AD). "Maya medicine today is an amalgam of the ancient, medieval, and modern," she said. It includes traditions brought over by the Spanish, who conquered most of Central America in the sixteenth century.

Rosita looked young, strong, and effortlessly at ease as she prepared our lunch. It was hard to believe that she was nearing fifty and had a son in his mid-twenties. Born in the Old Town section of Chicago, she earned a BA in French, then dropped out in 1968 to move to California. "I joined the hippie revolution," is how she phrased it. In 1970, she moved to a remote region of Mexico to escape the turmoil of the Vietnam era. There she lived with the Nahuatl Indians in Guerrero, a fourteen-hour walk from the village, which was a twenty-hour bus ride from the Acapulco Highway. "We grew all of our food; 65 percent was a wild-food diet — berries, nuts, leaves, roots, beans, fruits."

It was in Guerrero that she first fell in love with plants and found she had a knack for healing. "Using medicinal plants is a very big part of the lives of the Nahuatl. To learn, I followed women

Some Useful Plants

Rosita Arvigo works in partnership with Dr. Michael Balick of the Institute of Economic Botany at the New York Botanical Gardens. "It's a very uncommon approach for a classically trained scientist to work with a healer trained in nontraditional practices," said Dr. Balick. "Rosita and I are convinced this is the best approach." Healers and scientists need to work together in order to better understand the medicinal properties of the world's plants. "We're convinced this will be the approach of the nineties."

Dr. Balick provided information about some of the plants com-



Guava (*Psidium guajava*).

monly used by the Maya. These are all found along Ix Chel's Panti Trail.

Cohune Palm (*Orbignya cohune*):

This can be used as a cooking oil and as a skin ointment. The shell can be burned as charcoal.

Cockspur (*Acacia cornigera*):

The thorns of the cockspur are collected and boiled into a tea. People use this tea to wash with. It's also used to treat acne. The bark is useful against snakebites, according to Maya bush doctors.

Spanish Elder (*Piper amalago*): It has an aromatic leaf that people use as a pulp when they have a

and children around. I discovered I enjoyed being a farmer. I consider myself a farmer-doctor; that's what I always wanted to be, and I like to see my dreams come true."

In 1976 she returned to the States, and eventually decided to enroll in a Doctor of Naprapathy program in Chicago. "I didn't want to be an M.D." In 1983 she and her husband, Greg Shropshire (also a healer), bought 35 acres of uncleared land and began to build.

Today they farm, treat patients, have people for fasts and rests, and conduct seminars. They're

visited by groups like the Audubon Society, the Sierra Club, the British Army (in Belize until long-standing territorial disputes with neighboring Guatemala are settled), and class trips. Tourists and people from the surrounding villages come to be treated for infected bug bites, skin conditions, coral burns, amoebas, and parasites.

"What we get are the people who have been failed by the medical profession," explained Rosita as she sliced cheese. "What is most difficult for them is easiest for us and vice versa. We are complementary. I think there should be medical

Dr. Michael Ballick



Rosita Arvigo and her husband, Greg Shropshire, inspecting medicine from nature's pharmacy.

toothache or swollen gums. Dripped on a cut, its juice promotes healing.

Bay Cedar (*Guazuma ulmifolia*): The bark is boiled and used to calm the stomach. It's also used for dysentery.

Skunk Root (*Petiveria alliacea*): The root is made into a tea, used to treat stomach ulcers.

Pa Sak (*Simaruba glauca*): Good for dysentery and restoring the tone of the intestines.

Copal (*Protium copal*): If you have a toothache, you poke a piece of fresh resin inside the cavity. The



Gumbo-Limbo (*Bursura simaruba*).

resin is supposed to expand and push the bad tooth out.

Guava (*Psidium guajava*): Its bark, taken as a tea, is good for dysentery and diarrhea.

Wild Yam (*Dioscorea*): This is said to build the blood (bad blood is a disease concept in Belize).

Poisonwood (*Metropium brown-eii*)/**Gumbo-Limbo Tree** (*Bursura simaruba*): Poisonwood gives you poison-ivy-like symptoms. The gumbo-limbo tree always grows near where poisonwood grows. Its sticky inner bark is rubbed on a wound from the poisonwood.

freedom. Not everyone is a candidate for holistic health nor should everyone automatically be a candidate for allopathic care."

She and Shropshire conduct three- to ten-day seminars for doctors and nurses, in which they teach health for living, Maya medicine, herbology and shamanism. They offer these seminars because they believe nontraditional practitioners and Western practitioners need to work more closely together.

"What's the point of defaming one another when we can work together? I want doctors to come and discuss traditional healing and try it for themselves. At one time all doctors were herbalists. I'd like to say that doctors have forgotten their roots.

"There's a lot of hope in the world for the integration of traditional medicine. I know a lot of young doctors who are totally open to integration. They really want to learn."

The mainstream medical establishment is becoming more aware of the value of traditional medicine. Ix Chel is funded by the Institute of Economic Botany of the New York Botanical Gardens with monies from USAID and the National Cancer Institute. Their goal is to study the relationship between plants and people in Belize. This means they study the plants, healers, and healing systems of Belize's eight cultural groups: Mopan/Maya, Kekchi' Maya, Yucatec Maya, Ladino, Mennonite, Garifuna, East Indian, and Creole. (Belize is a unique place for a study like this. There are few countries with so few people but such a diverse population.)

Ix Chel also collects plant samples that are sent to the National Cancer Institute as part of a project to survey the hemisphere's tropical plants for species with anti-HIV and anticancer factors.

In 1986, Don Eligio and Rosita bushed a one-mile plant trail she calls the Panti Trail, after her teacher. The trail is to educate people about the value of plants that naturally exist in the Belize environment.

Rosita and Dr. Michael Balick, director of the In-

Tom Ives



"At one time all doctors were herbalists." Ix Chel collects plant samples that are sent to the National Cancer Institute, which tests them for anti-HIV and anticancer factors.

stitute of Economic Botany and chairman of Ix Chel, are writing a book on local plants people in Belize can use for healing. They are trying to reconstruct knowledge about the Maya medical system. Their work is one of a handful of projects worldwide that hope to study rainforest plants and knowledge before deforestation occurs. "I've always felt that Don Eligio's knowledge belongs not just to Belize but to the world," said Rosita as she put the final touches on the colorful feast that would soon be our lunch.

I was never into organic food until this meal was set out on the table. It was one of the freshest, most delicious meals I've ever

had — thin wheat bread with mustard and tuna open-faced, sweet and perfect carrots, cukes, collard greens, parsley, cheese, red tomatoes, peppermint water and soft green coconut.

No sooner had we finished than a middle-aged American woman appeared at the top of the riverbank. She was breathing heavily from the sharp climb. "I'm looking for Rosita," she said quietly. "Do you think she can help me with my pain?" Rosita disappeared with the woman into the "healing house." Crystal took my hand and took me for a swim in the river. Then she showed me her room (amazingly like any teenager's room in Chicago) and taped me the greatest hits of Belize, a combination of Punta Rock, reggae and Bob Marley.

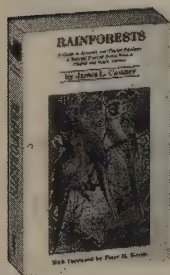
Later I saw the woman leave, looking relieved, and found Rosita in the kitchen cleaning up after lunch. "I don't really have any problem that needs to be healed," I told her. After lunch and swim I exuded health and energy; I felt strong and resilient, warm and happy. My only complaint was a vague sense of discomfort with modern life and the concern that life was not going where I wanted. "You're doing fine," she said. "It'll happen," just in passing, as she rinsed off the last dish and set it out to dry. ☘

Rainforests

This is the first reference book designed specifically for people who wish to visit a rainforest, whether to do research or simply to enjoy the beauty and biological diversity. Though *Rainforests* deals strictly with the New World tropics, it is quite thorough in describing locations, logistics, forest types, trail systems, and the costs of visiting sites in seven of the most accessible countries. It also tells you how to contact lodge owners and field-station directors and where to find relevant books and maps. —Joe Kane

Unfortunately, with the exception of Jungle Rudy's Camp Ucaima, Camp Canaima [Venezuela] is the only facility available to visitors wishing a quick look at Angel Falls and the tepuis. I felt 'hustled' from the moment I got off the plane until I left. Service could have been much better in all respects, and all employees except the tour guides seemed to have a lackadaisical attitude. While the rooms were comfortable, the housing was shabby and in need of several minor repairs. The open-air dining hall afforded a spectacular view, but made dining a constant battle between visitors and flies.

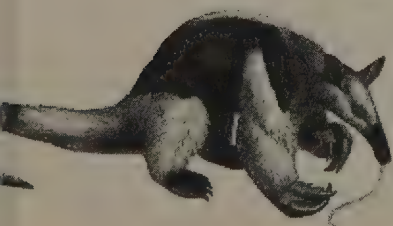
In support of Camp Canaima, it gives visitors easy and rapid access to one of the most interesting and unique areas of the world. It permits tours and excursions in relative comfort to what otherwise would almost be totally inaccessible sites.



Rainforests

James L. Castner,
1990; 416 pp.

\$21.95 (\$23.45 postpaid) from Feline Press, P. O. Box 7219, Gainesville, FL 32605



Ancient Futures

Helena Norberg-Hodge has had the dubious privilege of watching a sustainable society, elegantly coevolved with its rigorous environment, fall ill with the virus of development. The society is Ladakh, in the xeric Western Himalayas.

A Swedish linguist who went to study Ladakhi in '75, and to collect folk stories there, Norberg-Hodge was a little incredulous at the happiness, well-being, cooperation, and nonviolence that the Ladakhi people, despite the extremely harsh conditions of their existence, enjoyed.

In 1978, the Indian government decided to promote tourism to Ladakh, and initiated some development projects. Social deterioration followed with breathtaking speed. *Ancient Futures* could stand as a cautionary tale (if there were that many intact life-places left whose despoliation could be cautioned against). But the book is no mere epitaph.

Norberg-Hodge and her colleagues have organized to counter the half-truths of development advocates. They also promote the use of appropriate technology to improve Ladakhi lives and households without rendering them dependent on faraway governments and suppliers.

Ancient Futures is a colloquial ethnography of a remarkably sane society, a documentary critique of the Western model of development, and a sound and modest proposal for the creation, locally and globally, of a counterforce.

—Stephanie Mills

[Suggested by Peter Calthorpe]

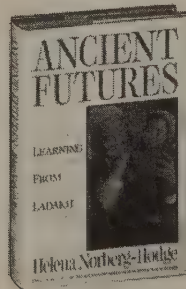
The same yardsticks, originally developed for Europeans, are used everywhere. For instance, the indicators that determine how much a baby should weigh at a certain age, what the minimum room temperature should be, and what a healthy diet is, are applied universally. Western experts refer to both the people and animals of Ladakh as "stunted" because they are smaller than the global standard! The accepted levels for exposure to radiation, which were established for young European white males, are applied to all people regardless of age, sex, or size. The narrow and specialized outlook of some experts prevents them from seeing the broad implications of their work and the cultural insensitivity of their universal answers.

When asked, at a recent symposium, about the vegetables they used to eat in Africa before we started exporting our seeds to them, a Swedish agricultural specialist answered, "They didn't have any. They used to eat weeds." To him the plants they ate did not have the same status as the plants that he was used to calling "vegetables."



In Ladakh, boys and girls alike are encouraged to develop their nurturing instincts.

I remember the first time I went with Sonam to visit his family in Hemis Shukpa-chan. As we sat around the kitchen stove, he described the tourists he'd seen in Leh. "They look so busy," he said. "They never seem to sit still. Just click, click, click..." He pretended to take a photograph, to the incomprehension of his audience. Then he patted his little sister on the head, imitating a tourist: "Here's a ball-point pen for you." They're always rushing like this," he said, jumping up and running jerkily around the kitchen. "Why are they in such a hurry?"



Ancient Futures

Helena Norberg-Hodge, 1991; 192 pp.

\$25 (\$28 postpaid) from Sierra Club/Store Orders, 730 Polk Street, San Francisco, CA 94109; 415/923-5500 (or Whole Earth Access)

PlantWise

There is a worldwide network of people working to preserve ethnobotanical knowledge, the cultures that engender that knowledge, and the plants themselves. Kat McKenna, plantswoman and artist, is a vibrant node in this network, providing information about successful efforts and pointing others to problems that need solutions. Kat's nonprofit organization, Botanical Dimensions, shares information through **PlantWise**, which is full of useful lore about the medicinal, cultural, and spiritual uses of plants. If you're seriously green, this occasional lush leaf is for you. —Robin Bishop

• Hawaiian Project

Our strategy for dealing with [destruction of native habitats and societies] has been to secure 19 acres of forested land on the island of Hawaii to serve as a botanical garden and gene bank for species of plants important to maintaining human health and spiritual well-being. At Botanical Dimensions our greatest interest lies in the ethnomedicinal plants of the tropics worldwide. We have field experience with the indigenous people of the Amazon and much of the extensive botanical pharmacopeia of Amazonian ethnomedicine is under cultivation at the Hawaiian site. We also have an expanding collection of live specimens and data from Pacific, Asian and African cultures.

■ In San Ignacio, Belize, I met Don Eligio Panti, an aging Mayan healer who uses plants and prayer very effectively on his many patients, who are mostly thirty and older, as he says the young ones only want the little pills. He has in recent years taught an American, Rosita Arvigo, some of his life's work and she and her family maintain a medicinal plant demonstration farm not far away. He still has not found an indigenous apprentice, and says he is now too old, that Rosita will have to carry on. He sparkles as he sits among his burlap bags of leaves, under a tin roof, thunder and rain hammering, speaking Maya and Spanish with a fine old ladyfriend and me. I love his camouflage-cloth Pepsi cap. Taught some of what he knows by a *curandero*, he says most of his knowledge came to him from "the spirits." It is heartening that some of us can learn to listen even as many are forgetting.

■ Most of the tree species occurring on two of the study plots were found useful in at least one way; on the other two, about half were used in some way. For example, of one tract's 99 tree species, 34 are major or minor sources of food, and more than 20 percent are effective in preparing remedies for anything from stomach ailments to canker sores. The Indians using the trees of another plot indicated that more

than 35 percent of those species have medicinal value.

■ Fourteen years ago, while investigating plant medicine in the Peruvian Amazon, I asked Don Fidel Mosombite — a *curandero* who uses plants for healing — how people first learned the recipe for *ayahuasca*, the hallucinogenic brew used for diagnosis, healing, and spiritual balance among many Amazonian tribes. Even more than with many plant medicines, human knowledge of the drug is remarkable because it requires at least two plants, *Banisteriopsis caapi* and *Psychotria viridis*, which often grow in different conditions far from each other, and only together create the profound effect that neither can attain alone. With 80,000 or more species in the South American rainforest, trial and error seems unlikely. Don Fidel, a native of the Rio Huallaga basin, told me that when the Incas were the rulers of the Andes, some 600 years ago, a great white bird with huge wings flew down from their kingdom in the mountaintops, sailing over the vast jungle, telling the people that great changes were



PlantWise

Kathleen Harrison McKenna, Editor
\$20/4 issues from Botanical Dimensions,
P. O. Box 807, Occidental, CA 95465



coming. The bird showed the forest people the two plants that they should collect and brew together. The bird said that strange and powerful men would come, and great suffering would ensue, but that if the forest people would make this brew and drink it, they would not forget who they were, they would not be forsaken by the plant spirits. They would survive.

• A Neanderthal burial excavated in Iraq, dated approximately 60,000 years ago, disclosed pollen clusters of numerous plants, many of which are medicinal. While there can be no certainty that these people were aware of the economic and medicinal properties of the flowers, it is reasonable to assume that they were well experienced with the ambient vegetation, since their existence depended on it.

Plant Fiber Cordage

Jim Riggs begins by explaining how the world of aboriginal peoples was literally held together by cordage. He shows how to identify, harvest, extract fibers, and make cordage from dogbane (*Apocynum cannabinum*), stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*), and milkweed (*Asclepias speciosa*).

In general, the stalks are harvested after death, but not left standing over a year. (In wetter climates, rotting proceeds faster; thus dead plants should not be left standing as long before picking.) To extract the fibers, a stalk is crushed along its entire length between the fingers, given a quarter turn, and crushed a second time. Then the stalk is separated along its length into two halves. Next, a section of half-stalk, one inch long, is bent so the pith breaks, and the fibers are peeled back. This is repeated for the length of the half-stalk. The bark is now removed from the fibers by rubbing briskly between dry hands.

Jim shows how to make a one-ply cord: One bundle of fibers (half a stalk) is rolled on the thigh to give it a twist (the twist imparts more strength). For greater strength, Jim shows an easy way to make the cord into two-ply: Hold the cord stretched in front of oneself. Grasp the middle with one's teeth. Maintaining tautness, bring the two ends together. With ends held together, release one's teeth; the cord twists itself into two-ply. Rolling the cord on one's thigh tightens up the twist. Other methods of making two- and four-ply cordage are also covered.

Lilies of the Hearth

Women and plants have been close associates throughout human history, but being the relatively quiet types, this hasn't been much talked about. Jennifer Bennett, the gardening editor of *Canada's Harrowsmith*, has spent years collecting anecdotes, myths, medieval references, rites, herbal practices, and even correspondence between proper English lady gardeners. In *Lilies of the Hearth*, she focuses largely on European and Mediterranean societies of the past several thousand years, and their North American descendants, but then these are the women who have written or been written about. Combined in this book, these fragments make a densely detailed tapestry of evidence that women have represented, nurtured and repeatedly altered the



place of nature in culture. Women have in turn been altered by it: Our social standing and perceived value has fluctuated with our botanical stereotypes, especially in the two hundred years of witchhunts (we knew too much about medicinal and magical plants), and the Victorian era, during which we were modeled after delicate flowers, easily wilted.

Bennett covers such topics as the Virgin Mary's plants, botany as the first science women could pursue, female botanical artists, and women in horticulture. She then looks to the future with some questions about where this relationship is going now, as we recultivate the earth goddess, and with so much depending on us. The book is a valuable resource, with some interesting illustrations and a great bibliography.

—Kathleen Harrison McKenna

Weeder women were employed by royalty and the wealthy in Renaissance England, and diarist Celia Fiennes wrote that she saw a "figure of stone resembling an old weeder woman used in the garden" at Woburn Abbey in Bedfordshire in the 17th century.

As someone apt to be ill-humoured while performing the necessary but endless job of weeding, I am amused by a story in *The Sexual Life of Savages in North-Western Melanesia*, in which Bronislaw Malinowski describes the natives of the Trobriand Islands. The islanders believed that the women, when carrying out the strictly female task of weeding the gardens, would seize any man who wandered by, rape him and

submit him to other indignities. The native men avoided the gardens during weeding season, as did Malinowski himself. In 1656, however, when William Coles published *The Art of Simpling*, all such danger and drudgery were merely wholesome. "Gentlewomen," he wrote, "if the ground be not too wet, may doe themselves much good by kneeling upon a Cushion and weeding." It's all for your own good, dear.

Persephone's symbol was the pomegranate, because as a result of eating its seeds, she was committed to an eternal marriage with Hades in the underworld. (The pomegranate is an emblem of red, womblike, seed-filled fertility and, like the apple, recurs throughout the history of women and plants. It is interesting that the pomegranate has recently been found to contain small quantities of the female hormone progesterone.)

Of course, such "fathers of herbal medicine" as Dioscorides did not simply pull their therapeutic theories out of the air. His herbal was the human, largely female heritage finally recorded by a man interested in the subject and literate enough to be able to write it down. Ironically, the early records of women's knowledge could be read by very few women.

The mandrake (*Mandragora officinarum*), however, a powerful plant and one of the witches' favourites, was mentioned in the *Song* only as the source of "a smell." Like other poisonous plants, it was decidedly not Marian. Women could be divided metaphorically into two groups, then, according to their herbal affiliations: those who sided with Mary could be considered much like flowers or benign medicinal plants, while those who followed the ancient codes of the witches were considered to be as poisonous as the plants they grew.

When Jim demonstrates, his hands are filmed from over his shoulder; thus viewers have the same perspective Jim does, and the same one they have when looking at their own hands. This video does a superb teaching job.

For more durable cordage than plant fibers can provide — such as what's needed for a bow drill or fire bow — sinew (animal tendon) is used. Sinew cordage will be covered in another *Aboriginal Skills* video. —Julie Summers

Plant Fiber Cordage

Video by Jim Riggs, 1990.

\$29.95 (\$32.95 postpaid) from Northwestern Video Productions, P. O. Box 251, Roseburg, OR 97470; 503/673-3294



Lilies of the Hearth

Jennifer Bennett, 1991; 191 pp.

\$14.95 (\$17.70 postpaid) from Camden House Books/Order Dept., Ferry Road, Charlotte, VT 05445; 800/344-3350 (or Whole Earth Access)

GREEN PLAN

Waiting for a US

BY RICHARD NILSEN



RECENT CONFERENCE ON national Green Plans made the United States appear backward compared to what's happening in Canada and Europe. "Green Plan" is a short name for a comprehensive environmental recovery program. Many Western nations now have one, but not the US.

The Resource Renewal Institute sponsored the conference, "National Policies Toward a Green Century," in Marin County, California in March 1992. RRI is the current project of environmentalist Huey Johnson, former Resources Secretary of California and a former Point board member (see his "Canada Heralds Green Plan," *WER* #72, p. 52).

Government officials charged with running these programs in the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Austria, Britain, and Canada spoke. Several American states also have green plans; these were presented, as was the work being done by certain forward-looking American corporations.

Conspicuous by its absence was the US federal government. A lone Environmental Protection Agency official, Robert Currie, described EPA's method as "Driving down the highway by looking into the rearview mirror and watching things fall off the car, and assuming that because the road behind is straight, the road ahead will be too." This after-the-fact approach to environmental problems was given another analogy by several speakers: following a horse and cleaning up the manure, instead of leading the horse or riding it.

The Netherlands and Norway are riding the horse. Instead of dividing the problem into pieces — energy policy, air and water quality, wildlands/habitat, and forestry — these nations are taking a comprehensive, whole-systems approach to environmental recovery. Counselor for the Environment Johannes van Zijst explained that the Dutch currently have Environmental Policy Indicators for seven different components. Each is reduced to a line graph — down is good, up is bad. Every year the appropriate minister presents his graph to the parliament, and then has to defend it.

This way of doing a nation's environmental business got a huge shot in the arm several years back, when the Dutch Queen's annual Christmas address to her citizens basically said, "Our country is a mess and we must clean it up." That speech moved the ground of the debate in the Netherlands beyond "whether or not" to the issue of "how to."

Norway's Dr. Paul Hofseth seemed glad to be at the conference. "I've fled from New York," he said; he had been holed up there trying to hammer out policy as Norway's chief advisor to the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development. Hofseth said that Oslo has a half-million people, and on any given weekend, 100,000 of them are out hiking in the mountains outside the city. That kind of connection with nature is intrinsic to the strong environmental policies Norway has adopted.

Instead of regulating its businesses to death, Norway sets performance standards for environmental quality; how a company complies is for it to figure out. The government regulators do spot checks; when they find noncompliance, the penalties are severe. Hofseth told of a potato-chip plant, on a large lake that supplied the drinking water for many surrounding villages. The plant had expanded illegally, breaking numerous environmental laws and mucking up the water. When caught, not only did they have to make everything right, but all the profits generated by the expansion turned into a fine payable to the government. Norway occasionally even puts its errant CEOs in jail.

The governments of the Netherlands and Norway were cosponsors of the conference, and they kicked in the money so that representatives from Bangladesh, Kenya, and Russia could attend (two of them were speakers). Get this picture: Dutch and Norwegian taxpayers footing the bill so that three poor nations too strapped for airfare could attend a conference held in a Frank Lloyd Wright-designed conference theater at Marin County's Civic Center. It didn't make me proud to be an American.

Johnson described these Green Plans as "a wonderful form of idealism," explaining that "these European nations and Canada are making moves



The Resource Renewal Institute's goal is to have a Green Plan implemented in the US by the year 2000.

they know are meaningless unless other nations join in."

The most vivid example came from Austria's Director of the Ministry for Environment, Dr. Heinz Schreiber. A series of charts showing airborne pollutants blowing out of Austria versus pollutants blowing in from surrounding countries made it clear that Austria is getting hammered from all sides. Unless there is regional improvement, the huge reductions Austria is making will prove futile.

Austria is moving ahead, both to set an example for other nations in the European Community and because the situation is truly desperate. "We have to worry about the effects of acidification on the most remote forests in our tallest mountains, because our narrow valleys are full of people, and the health of those trees is all that prevents those hillsides washing down into our homes," Schreiber said.

Transportation is another big environmental issue, especially since Austria sits between two larger EC trading partners. Everything that moves by truck between Italy and Germany goes over Austria's Brenner Pass. "We made a bad mistake many years ago," Schreiber said, explaining that the neighboring Swiss set tonnage limits on their roads and refused to enlarge numerous mountain tunnels to accommodate larger trucks (though they did improve their railways). Austria allowed heavier tonnage on its highways, and today is stuck with all the pollution. Schreiber says his government is writing specifications for a whole new generation of cleaner trucks. The next step is selling the idea to the European Community.

American businesses do a huge amount of pissing and moaning about burdensome environmental regulations — claiming they are a hindrance in competing with foreign firms. One story from Canada's representative, Dr. Robert Slater, made this posture seem like the floundering of dinosaurs stuck in tar pits. The issue was chlorofluorocarbons and ozone depletion. The first goal was

elimination by the year 2000; ozone-hole urgency has moved that date up to 1995.

Slater described a Canadian company that decided on total CFC elimination in three years, coined the slogan "Free In Three," and will soon have achieved this goal. Besides the larger environmental benefit, this decision is producing an improvement in the company's operating efficiency and has had a huge effect on the kind of talent it has been able to attract. Instead of hiring young engineers and saying, "Here is our production line — your job is to keep it oiled and running smoothly," this company was saying, "Your job is to examine, question and modify any part of our entire process so that we can eliminate CFCs." That kind of freedom and responsibility attracted the best talent available.

Attacking President Bush and the Republicans on this issue is too easy. Better to ask whether anybody on the other side is prepared to deal with a systems approach to environmental recovery. Are we really supposed to wait for a white knight like Al Gore in '96? The Resource Renewal Institute isn't waiting.

Its goal is to have a Green Plan implemented in the US by the year 2000. RRI's Johnson understands how the political process works; he told the story of a reporter interviewing an aged Norman Thomas, the perennial Socialist presidential candidate.

"Mr. Thomas, how does it feel to be a failure?" says the reporter.

"Failure? What do you mean, failure?" Thomas says, and then begins to tick off his policies. He had lived long enough to see most all of them adopted, always by somebody else.

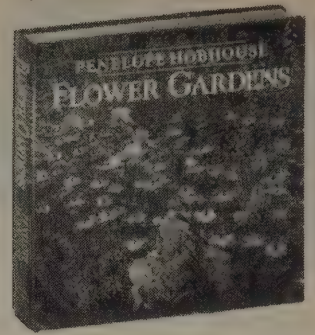
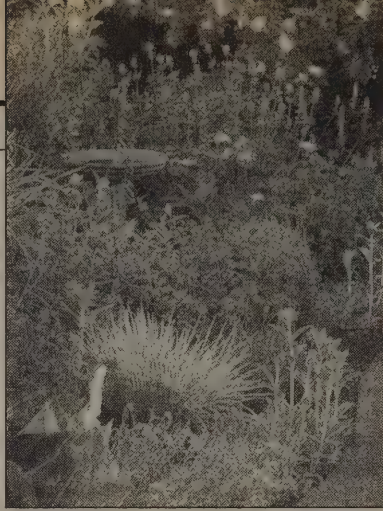
"Every time I presented a workable idea, someone in another party would grab it and call it his own."

Resource Renewal Institute:

Fort Cronkhite, Bldg. 1055, Sausalito, CA 94965;
415/332-8082. ☺

Flower Gardens

Often garden design is presented more like furnishing a house than building a home for plants. Penelope Hobhouse's *Flower Gardens* takes us through the garden, looking closely at individual plants, stepping back to see their companions, stepping further back to see their context, then back again to see the concept of the garden. Working from the plant to the design. The lush photography shows us all the richness of plants happily at home. —Kathleen O'Neill



Sometimes scientific breeding alters an harmonious natural balance, and highly bred 'improved' plants, selected for certain exaggerated characteristics such as flowering potential, lack the simple grace of their wild parents. Personally the more I garden, the more I prefer the elegant natural proportions of true species, even though I know that their performance is muted. With trees and shrubs such reticence would cause no problem, but in the flower garden my choice of perennials and annuals would be more limited and less satisfactory without 'improved' plants. However I do think it would be interesting to lay out a whole scheme using true species alone. I would certainly do this if I had a woodland garden in parts of the United States, where nature's 'produce' can hardly be bettered.

The gardener must therefore be concerned with finding suitable situations and providing the correct soil for individual plants as well as considering appropriate plant associations. It may be worse than useless to

In Susan Riley's garden in Victoria, Vancouver Island, good foliage plants are a high priority for setting off more fleeting seasonal flowers. Silvery *Stachys byzantina*, verbascum, helianthemum and santolina, the spiky variegated leaves of *Phalaris arundinacea picta* and a tall grey-leaved buddleja are foundation plants that look good all summer. Behind, soaring spires of *Eremurus himalaicus*, *Rosa 'Nevada'* and a drift of white valerian with some blue cranesbills (*Geranium 'Johnson's Blue'*) blend to make a quiet picture with the pink helianthemums and pink-backed floret rays of osteospermum flowers.

put plants that require moisture next to those that need a dry well-drained site, or acid-loving plants close to those requiring alkaline conditions, and so on. The art of gardening lies not only in designing with shapes and colours; in a successful composition plants should look and be happy growing together because they require similar conditions. Some garden design is common sense but is easily overlooked by the flower-gardener who may initially think of colour and leaf association rather than considering these fundamentals.

Astrantias have dome-shaped flower-heads composed of tiny florets surrounded by a decorative collar of narrow segmented bracts, giving a charming star-like effect. This arrangement is typical of the Umbelliferae or carrot family; the clusters of small flowers in umbrella-shaped umbels offer an abundance of nectar and convenient landing platforms, making umbellifers popular both with insect pollinators and with the wildlife that preys on insects.



Flower Gardens

Penelope Hobhouse, 1991; 215 pp.

\$45 postpaid from Little, Brown & Co./ Order Dept., 200 West Street, Waltham, MA 02154; 800/343-9204

Country Flowers

A look at the originals — plants that came early into gardens and stayed; flowers that have done fine without the hand of the hybridizer ("Every garden flower was once wild"). Flowers are shown in the garden, and in arrangement. Some herbal uses are given, and a short history of each plant's travel, passing hand to hand to hand from its native home to our gardens. —Kathleen O'Neill



The genus *Eupatorium* is enormous, with more than a thousand species. Most are centered in Mexico and South America, as well as the West Indies. A few are

indigenous to North America, Asia, and Europe. The name *Eupatorium* honors Mithridates Eupator, the king of ancient Pontus, a country bordering on the Black Sea, who is credited with the discovery that one kind was an antidote to poison. It seems that Mithridates, who ruled in the first century B.C., was the target of many attempts on his life through poisoning. Realizing that he was not universally admired by his subjects, he gradually immunized himself to every poison known by taking gradually increasing doses. His hobby was dabbling in antidotes, just to be on the safe side.

The most famous of the genus, *E. purpureum*, was a prominent healing plant of the New England Indians. It came to be called Joe Pye Weed, after the nineteenth-century medicine showman who promoted the root to induce sweating in typhus fever. Contrary to popular opinion, Pye was Caucasian, not an authentic medicine man.

Joe Pye Weed grows in thickets from New Hampshire to Florida, and west to Nebraska. It became a traditional medicinal herb

The Butterfly Book

A good introduction on how to attract, identify, and grow butterflies in your garden. The planting guides suggest nectar and larval food plants. The section on identifying common butterflies gives their ranges, behaviors, and specific plant needs. There are also photos of caterpillars, in case you suspect that creepy-crawly you've found in the garden is actually a *Fritillary* or *Hairstreak*.

—Kathleen O'Neill

When you see a butterfly, watch it closely for several minutes. See how it flies — is it rapid or slow, bobbing or sailing, high or low? Look at its size — is it large, medium, or small? Look at its wing shape — do the wings have rounded edges, irregular edges,

pointed tips, or tails coming off the back? And look at its colors — do the wings have different upper and lower surfaces, do they have bands or spots, are they light or dark?

Once you have had a good look at it, flip through the next six pages of this book and find your butterfly. The species are grouped by family, and all are shown life size. Under the butterfly is the species' common name, its scientific name, and important clues that help distinguish this species from others that are like it.



Painted Lady (*Vanessa cardui*).

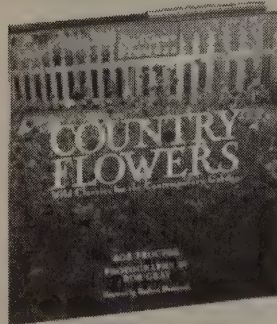


(Left) Monarch caterpillar. (Below) Queen.



Echinacea purpurea is native to open woodlands and prairies from Georgia to Oklahoma, as far north as Michigan, and south to Louisiana.

to treat gout, urinary ailments, asthma, fevers, chills, and impotence. Several related species are often called by the common name, but *E. purpureum* is the most widely grown. Thriving in moist, sunny meadows, it can reach a dizzying twelve feet in height. Fortunately for the gardener, it rarely does so, and its growth can be somewhat controlled by the amount of irrigation it receives and by midseason pinching. The flowers are held in tight, round clusters from July into early autumn. Not the standard daisy-type blossoms of the Compositae, the fuzzy, pale rose-purple flowers most closely resemble those of *Ageratum*, to which they are closely related.

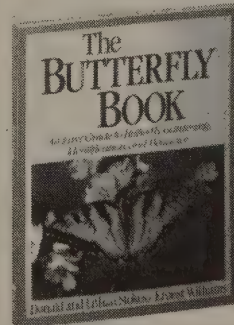


Country Flowers

(Wild Classics for the Contemporary Garden)

Rob Proctor and Rob Gray, 1991; 160 pp.

\$35 (\$38.50 postpaid) from HarperCollins Publishers/Direct Mail, P. O. Box 588, Dunmore, PA 18512; 800/331-3761 (or Whole Earth Access)

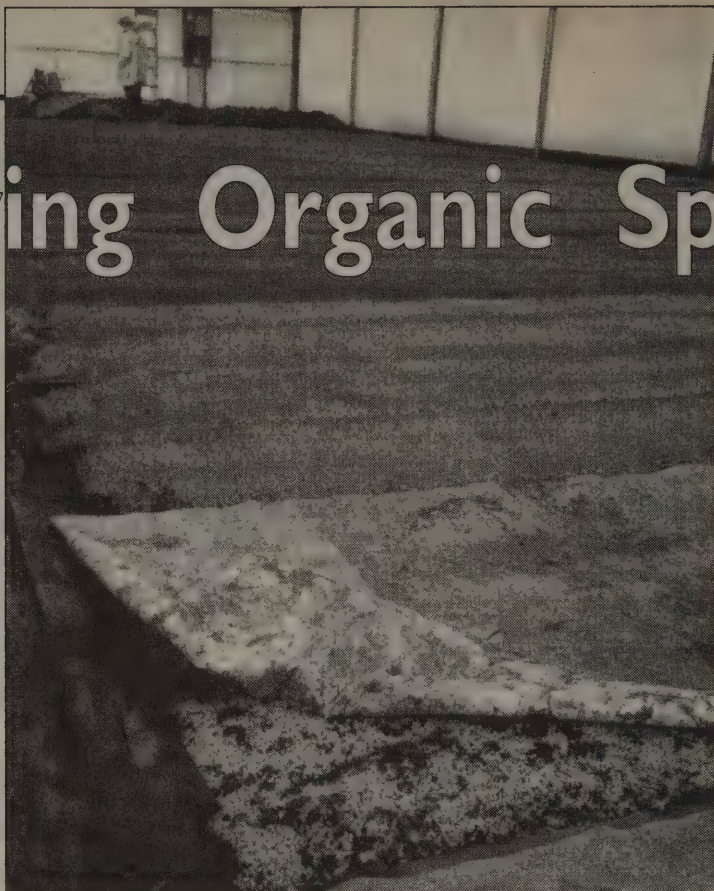


The Butterfly Book

Donald and Lillian Stokes and Ernest Williams, 1991; 96 pp.

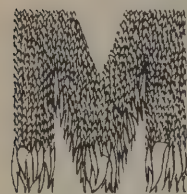
\$10.95 postpaid from Little, Brown & Co./Order Dept., 200 West Street, Waltham, MA 02154; 800/343-9204 (or Whole Earth Access)

Growing Organic Sprouts



A wheatgrass lawn, in stages. Wheat seed sprouts under the covers, then grows into a chlorophyll-rich lawn of deep green. The grass is harvested by hand and sold in bags to customers, who juice it themselves.

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY
RICHARD NILSEN



MORE than any other single food, sprouts have come to symbolize the changes in our eating habits over the last twenty-five years. They've invaded fast-food salad bars and are easy to find at the supermarket. Most sprouts that claim to be "organically grown" really aren't, a fact I never realized until I got to visit a sprout-growing operation that truly is organic. Greensward Nurseries, near Watsonville, California, was on the farm tour of the 1992 Eco-Farm Conference.

Co-owners Ken Kimes and Sandra Ward have been at it for twelve years. "It's not really farming," says Kimes. "We produce a value-added product — it's closer to food processing." The operation uses 20,000-25,000 gallons of wellwater a month, and lots of seed. With a rough rule

of thumb of one pound of seed for ten pounds of sprouts, Greensward Nurseries buys fifteen to twenty thousand pounds of seed, beans and grain every year. Because very few sprouters insist on organically grown seed, Kimes and Ward have had to develop a network of specialty seed growers in the Midwest and Canada. "The real environmental impact of what we do is in the fields of seed we buy," says Kimes.

Pesticides sprayed on the seed crop can end up as residue on your salad plate. In the case of the ubiquitous alfalfa sprout, the number of synthetic chemicals approved for use on seed alfalfa is enormous. Kimes once did some research, and the list of approved chemicals for alfalfa he got back from the California Department of Food and Agriculture ran on for 29 pages.

Large-scale commercial sprout op-

erations typically work out of windowless warehouses, growing on a four-day cycle for alfalfa sprouts, using artificial light (and very strong UV lights to control the inevitable fungus buildup in a closed structure). Greensward Nurseries sprouts in sunlight, and the growing cycle varies with the season — alfalfa can take up to seven days; sunflower and buckwheat, twelve.

The difference is obvious when you bite into these sprouts — they are bigger, thicker and crunchier. "It gives us a real green sprout with a nice fat leaf," says Kimes. ☘

Greensward Nurseries:
Box 1413, Freedom, CA 95019;
408/728-4136.

The Eco-Farm Conference is held annually at Asilomar, near Monterey; it is sponsored by the Committee for Sustainable Agriculture (Box 1300, Colfax, CA; 916/346-2777).



1992 Eco-Farm tour arrives at Green-sward Nurseries. Organically grown seed is sprouted inside the 8,000-square-foot double-quonset greenhouse, built of fiber-glass with a double-membrane polyethyl-ene roof. A small fan keeps a forced-air pillow of insulating air between the roof membranes.



Co-owner Sandra Ward harvests sun-flower sprouts. Because only organically grown seed is used for these sprouts, consumers avoid pesticide residues. Sunflowers grown nonorganically are sprayed with defoliant before the seed heads are harvested.



Freshly cut sunflower sprouts ready for packaging (foreground); trays of sprouting alfalfa seed (behind) are kept moist by au-tomatic sprinklers. Alfalfa and bean seed are sprouted in trays; sunflower, buck-wheat, and wheat grass are sown in soil.

At the shipping-depart-ment end of the green-house, Nancy Gould and Teddy Lyon package sprouts for sale.



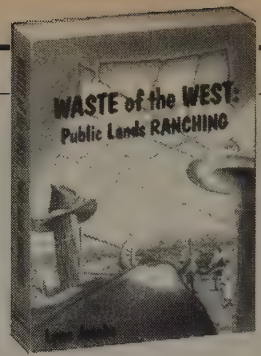
Waste of the West

Lynn Jacobs is a man with a mission: he wants to get private cattle off of America's public Western lands. A worthy challenge, since this involves confronting a problem of truly mythic proportions — the cowboy.

Jacobs started with a tabloid newspaper full of pictures of overgrazed pastures (a version of which ran as "Welfare Ranching" in *WER* #53, p. 46). He has now produced a definitive tome, full of scrupulous research and with hundreds of fascinating photos. As this book makes

abundantly clear, cattle are truly dumb animals, and the serious damage they cause the environment is readily apparent. What's more interesting is the people connected to those animals, and reckoning how they might be persuaded to change.

After a hundred years of mythology, it is a real service to see the counter-arguments so forcefully presented. If you like your icons skewered, come and get 'em. —Richard Nilsen



Waste of the West
Lynn Jacobs, 1991; 602 pp.

\$28 postpaid from Lynn Jacobs,
P. O. Box 5784, Tucson, AZ 85703



**Cattle trails on degraded
New Mexico BLM range.**

Bighorns forage on heavily grazed BLM cattle range near Cody, Wyoming, but if snow piles too high they may starve — while the cattle responsible for the lack of forage are fed hay.



Beyond Beef

The subtitle — "The Rise and Fall of the Cattle Culture" — is what this book is about: our ancient and continuing association with cattle. One result is widespread environmental impacts, everything from human diseases and starvation to greenhouse gases. The "Fall" is what the author hopes to promote.

Much of what's here has been well said before by others — Frances Moore Lappe's *Diet for a Small Planet*, Orville Schell's *Modern Meat*, and John Robbins' *Diet for a New America*. The issue has now risen over the horizon of Rifkin's inside-the-Beltway East Coast radar and here is his response — a glib book on an important subject. —Richard Nilsen

■ The pressure of increased cattle against both natural and artificially imposed ecosystems, as well as the growing reliance on feed grains to support a burgeoning livestock population, is spawning still another environmental change, this time on an even grander scale. Whereas earlier invasions devastated native plants and animals and

introduced nonnative species into New World habitats, today's assaults are destroying the very biosphere itself, threatening the future stability and viability of entire bioregions of the world.



Beyond Beef

Jeremy Rifkin, 1992; 353 pp.

\$21 (\$23 postpaid) from E. P. Dutton/
Cash Sales, 120 Woodbine Street,
Bergenfield, NJ 07621; 800/253-6476
(or Whole Earth Access)

The Wildlife Damage Review

Your tax dollars go for a lot of things you'd rather not know about, and the federal Animal Damage Control program is one of them. These are the folks who kill the "predators" — bear, cougar, coyote, and (at one time) eagles — that harm private livestock grazing on federal lands. It's been this way since the 1930s, and in sickeningly typical bureaucratic fashion, the program costs more to run than the value of the livestock lost. All this in support of the tiny fraction of cattle raised on public lands (most cattle are raised on private pasture and in feedlots).

The Wildlife Damage Review is a new group attempting to publicize and change this. It's animal-rights activism from people who are not vegetarians. —Richard Nilsen

■ Letter From A Concerned Montanan

Dear Friends,

I used to trap fur for a living so I know something about the game. I am surprised and concerned about the slipshod and careless way these ADC (Animal Destruction Control) people are operating. I always had the notion that they didn't use M44s (sodium cyanide) except in remote areas far from settled communities. But here in Montana they are putting out the getters on places like the *Fairfield Bench*, a densely populated area of small irrigated farms, many of them only a few hundred acres. There are

Governing the Commons

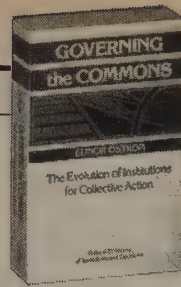
It is a powerful commentary on the limitations of modern institutions that this compelling rethinking of how we might salvage endangered ecosystems comes from looking at traditional customs, such as maintaining "commons" in villages.

We don't have ways to think about managing CPRs (common-pool resources, or large resource systems) other than the fallback to centralized government authority or to the currently trendy appeal to market efficiency. (Government intervention usually botches things up further and short-term profit maximization can quickly destroy a CPR. Yet viable CPRs are essential for biodiversity and sustainable growth.) So it is an exciting surprise to find a study that examines self-organizing and self-governing CPRs that do not simply rely on external authority. Ostrom makes her point by analyzing cases in great detail (sardine fishing, Japanese mountain villages, Swiss commons, etc.). This is the way to go — hover low over the data, appreciate the subtle, evolving

nature of CPR management, avoid being deluded by the superficial elegance of static model-building.

As we contemplate local environmental issues (groundwater, or waste disposal, or parkland rights), a rich, changing mixture of private and public interactions is closer to what we actually do than invoking magically effective legislation or external government agencies that will solve the problem once and for all. "Act locally" means a voluntary group self-organized, self-governed, and committed to collective action. —Steve Barnett

■ The issues of how best to govern natural resources used by many individuals in common are no more settled in academia than in the world of politics. Some scholarly articles about the "tragedy of the commons" recommend that "the state" control most natural resources to prevent their destruction; others recommend that privatizing those resources will resolve the problem. What one can observe in the world, how-



Governing the Commons

Elinor Ostrom, 1990; 280 pp.

\$14.95 (\$16.95 postpaid) from Cambridge University Press, 110 Midland Avenue, Port Chester, NY 10573. Outside NY: 800/872-7423; NY only: 800/227-0247 (or Whole Earth Access)

ever, is that neither the state nor the market is uniformly successful in enabling individuals to sustain long-term, productive use of natural resource systems. Further, communities of individuals have relied on institutions resembling neither the state nor the market to govern some resource systems with reasonable degrees of success over long periods of time.

● Design principles illustrated by long-enduring CPR institutions:

1. *Clearly defined boundaries.* Individuals or households who have rights to withdraw resource units from the CPR must be clearly defined, as must the boundaries of the CPR itself.
2. *Congruence between appropriation and provision rules and local conditions.* Appropriation rules restricting time, place, technology, and/or quantity of resource units are related to local conditions and to provision rules requiring labor, material, and/or money.
3. *Collective-choice arrangements.* Most individuals affected by the operational rules can participate in modifying the operational rules.
4. *Monitoring.* Monitors, who actively audit CPR conditions and appropriator behavior, are accountable to the appropriators or are the appropriators.
5. *Graduated sanctions.* Appropriators who violate operational rules are likely to be assessed graduated sanctions (depending on the seriousness and context of the offense) by other appropriators, by officials accountable to these appropriators, or by both.
6. *Conflict-resolution mechanisms.* Appropriators and their officials have rapid access to low-cost local arenas to resolve conflicts among appropriators or between appropriators and officials.
7. *Minimal recognition of rights to organize.* The rights of appropriators to devise their own institutions are not challenged by external governmental authorities.

For CPRs that are parts of larger systems:

8. *Nested enterprises.* Appropriation, provision, monitoring, enforcement, conflict resolution, and governance activities are organized in multiple layers of nested enterprises.

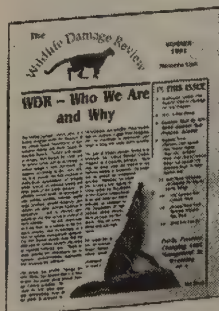


people, cats, dogs, hunters, and fishermen wandering all over the place. The big irrigation ditches are considered to be public access and hunters and fishermen travel them without asking the neighboring ranchers.

The warning signs they do put out are pitiful. A sheet of red paper about the size of this letter, curled around a fence post. The print is about the size of this typing, can't read it beyond three feet. They should have a distinctive symbol like the skull and crossbones, the universal sign of death, with print at least 1 inch tall.

Their signs are posted on one or two main entrygates along the road that happens to front the pasture. But the other three sides may not be posted at all. Thus even the adjoining neighbors may not know that the getters are just over the fence. You talk about an arrogant bunch of people

who are a law unto themselves, you've got it in this ADC program. —Anonymous



The Wildlife Damage Review

Free (2 issues/year) from P. O. Box 2541, Tucson, AZ 85702; 602/882-4218

MIDDLE EASTERN WOMEN

BY ANITA AMIRREZVANI

Despite the longstanding European fascination with "the world behind the veil," Westerners knew very little about Muslim women in the Middle East until recently. Most Western scholars and travelers were men, and therefore prohibited from seeing firsthand, or even inquiring about, the world of women. Even the rare female anthropologists who studied the Middle East often dismissed the world of women as insignificant compared to the male-dominated world of politics and law. Since the women's movement of the 1970s, however, a number of female scholars and travelers have attempted to correct the imbalance. Works by Middle Eastern women themselves are also available in translation. What follows is a selection of some of my favorite books.

• *Middle Eastern Muslim Women Speak* (p. 70) was previously reviewed in WER #49 (Winter 1985; p. 30), in a Special Section on Islam.



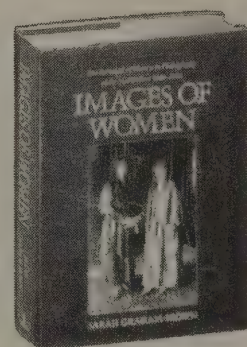
'Young Girl in Huraidha (Hadramaut, Yemen) in Traditional Dress'. Freya Stark, 1938.

Images of Women

Last year I spent six months in Yemen teaching English to a group of pharmacy students. Most of my female students wore a flowing black garment called the sharshaf and a veil that revealed only their eyes. At the end of the term I asked all the students to pose for a group photo, but the girls refused. Photographs, especially in the hands of a stranger, are a potentially dangerous form of public exposure.

Given the reluctance of many Middle Eastern women to be photographed,

Sarah Graham-Brown's collection of photos is especially valuable. Drawing on sources such as family albums, old postcards, travelers' photos, and scholarly archives, the author brings together images of women that most of us would never see otherwise. Excellent detailed captions accompany each photo, making the book a joy to browse through and to read. The author's discussion of how Western ideas have influenced the portrayal of the Middle East is especially strong, documenting a tradition that continues to this day.



Images of Women

(The Portrayal of Women in Photography of the Middle East, 1860-1950)

Sarah Graham-Brown, 1988; 288 pp.

\$44.50 (\$47.50 postpaid) from Columbia University Press/Order Dept., 136 S. Broadway, Irvington, NY 10533; 914/591-9111



'Scenes and Types — Arabian Woman with the Yashmak'.

A number of commercial photographs were taken playing on this theme of concealment and exposure. It was a logical extension of a common Western observation that women from the popular classes in Egypt often appeared more concerned to cover their faces than their breasts. Yet the starkness of this image suggests a form of violence, in the power of the photographer to lay bare parts of this woman's body at will. This type of face veil, the *burqa*, was characteristic of Egypt, not Arabia. It is certainly not a *yashmak*, which was the Turkish style of veil.

In this genre of photography, the images of Middle Easterners, particularly women, did not differ dramatically from similar types of photographic image created by Westerners of people in other parts of the world. The figure of the woman as an erotic and exotic object of the European's gaze can be seen in the reclining, almost naked African woman posed against a studio backdrop representing 'the jungle'; in the Japanese 'geisha' girl with her robe slipped from her shoulder; in the bare-breasted Samoan women posed as if playing cards; in the 'odalisque' with her semi-nudity, her jewels and her water pipe. All these studio photo-

graphs use pose and juxtaposition of objects to suggest sensuality, sexual availability or primitiveness. In the same way, studio portraits of 'native types', whether of Peruvian Indians, Polynesians, Algerian Kabyles or Zulus, all tended towards the same quality of archetypal anonymity.

Harem

Abbeville Press consistently produces some of the most beautiful books available, and this one is no exception. Like an art history text, the paperback is lavishly illustrated with European paintings depicting nineteenth-century fantasies about harem life. Alev Lytle Croutier, the Turkish-born author, also supplies intriguing black-and-white photos from her own family album, which provide a welcome contrast to the European paintings. Family members playfully display their Turkish costumes, enjoying the eye of the camera and the feeling of being dressed up. This individuality is entirely absent from most of the European works, which convey a mood of languid, depersonalized eroticism.

Like the illustrations, the text combines personal memoirs with vignettes of harem life, many so fanciful that they stretch the imagination. Did Ibrahim I, the Ottoman sultan from 1640 to 1648, really throw rubies into warm pools in the Seraglio for his harem girls to retrieve? Since many harem women were illiterate, and left no written record of their lives, there are many things we will never know.



Harem

(The World Behind the Veil)

Alev Lytle Croutier, 1989; 224 pp.

\$16.95 (\$19.95 postpaid) from Abbeville Press/Customer Service, 488 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10022; 800/227-7210 (or Whole Earth Access)

• One of the slips of parchment that the Archangel Gabriel passed on to Mohammed said: "If your wives do not obey you,

chastise them. If one wife does not suffice, take four." Mohammed himself had fifteen wives, an example that led to legalized abuse of the Koran's four-wife injunction.

According to the Koran, a woman's consent is not necessary for marriage. She can neither object to being one of four wives nor to her husband's having an unlimited number of odalisques. However, each of the four women must be treated with impartiality: each must have her own apartments, her own servants, and her own jewels.

• Since men and women did not associate socially, marriages were arranged by *görücü* (go-betweens), "agents" who visited harems, studied the merits of a certain girl, and passed their judgment on to the man's family. Sometimes these arrangements were orchestrated between relatives to strengthen the bonds of kinship. The betrothal of first cousins was and still is prevalent in most Islamic countries.

• The girls were all non-Moslems, uprooted at a tender age. The sultans were partial to the fair, doe-eyed beauties from the Caucasus region. Circassians, Georgians, and Abkhasians were proud mountain girls, believed to be the descendants of the Amazon women who had lived in Scythia near the Black Sea in ancient times and who had swept down through Greece as far as Athens, waging a war that nearly ended the city's glamorous history. Now they were being kidnapped or sold by impoverished parents. A customs declaration from around 1790 establishes their worth: "Circassian girl, about eight years old; Abyssinian virgin, about ten; five-year-old Circassian virgin, Circassian woman, fifteen or sixteen years old; about twelve-year-old Georgian maiden, medium tall negro slave, seventeen-year-old Negro slave. Costs about 1000-2000 kurush." In those days one could buy a horse for around 5000 kurush.



(Above) Turkish harem women without their veils.



(Left) Jean-Auguste Dominique Ingres, *Odalisque and Slave*, 1842. Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore.

Middle Eastern Muslim Women Speak

It's difficult to find books written by Middle Eastern women about themselves; many are out of print or have never been translated into English. This anthology helps fill the gap. It's an excellent source-book, especially about famous women who are unknown in the West, like the legendary Egyptian singer Umm Kulthum, the Turkish intellectual Halide Edib, and the Algerian revolutionary Jamilah Buhrayd. It also contains excerpts from novels and poems, lullabies and songs, interviews and even trial transcripts, many of which will inspire further reading. Photos and fine examples of Arabic calligraphy illustrate each chapter.



Middle Eastern Muslim Women Speak

Elizabeth Warnock Fernea and Basima Qattan Bezirgan, Editors. 1977; 414 pp.

\$14.95 (\$16.45 postpaid) from University of Texas Press, P. O. Box 7819, Austin, TX 78713-7819; 800/252-3206

I said, "Perhaps the heroism lay not in throwing the bomb but in your endurance of the worst kinds of torture to extract the names of your comrades, like 'Ali 'Ammar. And you didn't give them the names. Perhaps that was the heroism."

Jamilah was silent. She looked down and covered her face with her right hand. The mention of her comrades seemed to cause her pain.

Jamilah was trying to hide tears. But she controlled herself and said, "You keep asking about heroes. Well, I will tell you from my own memories about 'Ali 'Ammar. He and a nineteen-year-old girl called Hasibah Bu 'Ali and an eighteen-year-old boy were all members of our cell, the highest in ranks of the underground movement of the Fronte de Liberation Nationale (FLN) in the city of Algiers. General Lacoste, the Frenchman assigned to destroy us, had



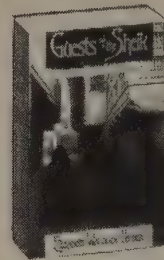
Algerian hero Jamilah Buhrayd.

made a map of the places where the movement was known to have been. One by one, he discovered the hiding places. This particular day, a shoeshine boy who worked with us heard that Lacoste had located the headquarters of our cell, in a house in the Qasbah. He rushed to tell us and the three — 'Ali, Hasibah, and the other boy — hid in an opening in the wall. Lacoste's men came into the house; they knew the three were hiding but did not find the wall. So they put a time bomb in the house and over their megaphones they announced that the rebels had seven hours to surrender or the house would be blown up. And everyone cleared out of the house, the children and the families, and the hours ticked by, but the three behind the wall preferred death to surrender. You ask me about heroes. They were heroes."

Guests of the Sheik

Today Elizabeth Warnock Fernea is a leading figure in Middle Eastern women's studies. But in the late 1950s, she was a young bride following her anthropologist husband to a small village in southern Iraq. This classic ethnography describes her two years in the village, much of it spent with the women of the sheik's harem. Each time I re-read the book, I admire Fernea's frankness about her struggles to be accepted in this traditional community. To the women of the harem she seems pathetic: childless, motherless, thin, and a poor cook. But that doesn't stop them from ribbing her mercilessly, especially at first. An older woman asks pointedly if she has any breasts; others laugh uproariously when a visitor spits out her freshly baked

bread in disgust. Slowly, by improving her Arabic and sharpening her repartee, Fernea wins their respect and even love. By turns witty, sympathetic, and insightful, her ethnography is one of the best I've ever read.



Guests of the Sheik

Elizabeth W. Fernea, 1969; 347 pp.

\$8.95 (\$11.45 postpaid) from Doubleday & Co./Cash Sales, P. O. Box 5071, Des Plaines, IL 60017-5071; 800/223-6834 (or Whole Earth Access)

Aziza and I became friends, but we did not speak of our friendship. If we had, Hind would have felt affronted (after all, she had known me first) and Laila and Khadija would have complained bitterly. For, I discovered, friendships among women were much more important and much more intense in this segregated society than in our own. Where the men spend the major part of their time away from women, the women have to depend on each other for company, for support, and for advice. A man might be a devoted father or brother or a loving husband, but in El Nahra he was seldom, if ever, a companion. I never heard a woman discuss her emotional attitude toward her husband or her father or brother, but long hours were spent in debates about the fidelity or indifference of women friends. Naturally these friendships became most serious for women who were single or childless or widowed, but even married women with large families had close women friends for whom they composed poems or cooked special sweets. To a visitor in the sheik's harem, Selma once said, "Beeja is not Fatima's friend, she is Laila's friend," and when I protested, she said, "Yes, yes, you and Fatima like each other but you are the friend of Laila." And that was that.

The mullah sat down and the two young girls stood to lead the congregation in a long, involved song with many responses. Gradually the women began to beat their breasts rhythmically, nodding their heads and beating in time to the pulse of the song, and occasionally joining in the choruses, or supplying spontaneous responses such as "A-hoo-ha!" or a long-drawn-out "Ooooooh!" This phase lasted perhaps ten

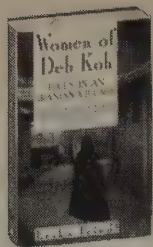
minutes, the girls sank down into their places, and the mullah arose to deliver a short sermon. She began retelling the story of the killing and betrayal of the martyr Hussein, which is told every night during Ramadan and is the beginning of the important part of the *kraya*. At first two or three sobs could be heard, then perhaps twenty women had covered their heads with their *abayahs* and were weeping; in a few minutes the whole crowd was crying and sobbing loudly. When the mullah reached the most tragic parts of the story, she would stop and lead the congregation in a group chant, which started low and increased in volume until it reached the pitch of a full-fledged wail. Then she would stop dead again, and the result would be, by this time, a sincere sobbing and weeping as the women broke down after the tension of the wail.

I sat silently, frozen by the intensity of it all, and hoping that none of the women, and especially the mullah, would notice that I was sitting without beating my breast, without chanting or weeping — in fact without participating at all. I contemplated throwing my *abayah* over my head, as all the other women had done, so the hawk-eyed mullah would not be able to tell whether I was crying or not, but by this time I thought she was sufficiently carried away by the force of her own words so that she wouldn't have cared. I was right. Real tears were coursing down that hard, shrewd face as she told, for the hundred thousandth time probably, the story of the death of the martyr.

Women of Deh Koh

Few books succeed in describing how women in a different culture think and feel, but this is such a book. Each chapter offers up a different slice of family life in a small Iranian village, describing typical problems and the courageous ways women solve them. An older woman, embarrassed by a pregnancy late in life, hides her swelling stomach and quietly gives birth alone while her husband and children sleep. A widowed woman screams, shouts, and tears her hair in public to force her family to repair a crumbling porch. A young bride fights the humiliating problem of barrenness with old-fashioned charms and modern medicine.

Erika Friedl, who visited the village of Deh Koh repeatedly over a period of 20 years, provides plenty of background information so that we understand the social context in which the problems arise. Her book reads like a novel, giving voice to women whose stories would otherwise go unheard.



Women of Deh Koh

(Lives in an Iranian Village)

Erika Friedl, 1989; 237 pp.

\$10 (\$12 postpaid) from Penguin USA/Cash Sales, 120 Woodbine Street, Bergenfield, NJ 07621; 800/253-6476

• Tala's mother Khanom bore fourteen children, seven of whom survived; Yusuf's mother Hava bore nine, of whom seven also survived. Tala's sisters had gotten pregnant within weeks if not days of getting married. But month after month Tala kept washing her soiled, old, innermost skirt, made of some twelve yards of sturdy cotton which soaked up her heavy flow of dark blood. Every month she noticed with rising anxious hopes her breasts harden and her belly swell, only to wake up one morning with the sickly smell of blood exuding from the heavy folds between her knees, crushing all anticipation. "I can't understand this," said Kerima, her sister-in-law and next-door neighbor. "From the nightly thumping in your house, one would think you'd get pregnant every week." And if there was an audience like Hava or one of the other women, she would go on describing the kinds of noises she claimed didn't let her sleep a wink: thrashing, groaning, moaning, shrieking, gurgling, deep grunting in imitation of Yusuf, until Tala was red with embarrassment and in turn, and with just as much talent, would give them a performance of Kerima and her husband's nightly activities. This was, they all agreed, in very bad taste, sinful even, considering that Yusuf's unmarried young sisters were listening, giggling into their hands; but the occasion was just too tempting for Kerima's boisterous sense of fun.

• Slowly a new order was creeping into the village. Some women changed the cap and light scarf of the traditional costume for a heavy headscarf pulled way down over the forehead. Whoever needed a new veil-wrap made sure it was of dark fabric. The village was swarming with strangers now: revolutionary guards coming and going, mullahs, Afghani refugees working for cheap wages for a local contractor, a few families from the south displaced by the war, local men returning from the cities after many years because of lack of work

there. Self-respecting women wrapped themselves tightly in their long veils when they had to be outside or else stayed home. Gouhar never went out. At most, she would stand in her doorway or squat right outside it, ready to retreat whenever strange men were in sight. She even had a private water faucet in her own courtyard. But Aftab, as usual, sat in full view on the ledge of her barn roof, not even wearing a veil — she was at home, anyway, she said — and the people started to whisper that she was begging for trouble.

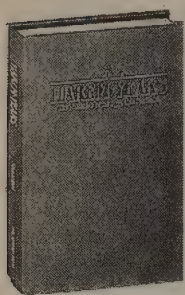
Harem Years

Huda Shaarawi, an upper-class Egyptian woman, was married at thirteen to an older cousin. But when her husband refused to divorce his first wife, Shaarawi returned to her mother's house and remained there until their reconciliation seven years later. In this book of memoirs, Shaarawi vividly describes life in her father's and then her husband's harem, recounting the stings of being female and her numerous attempts to rebel. As a young woman, she scandalized her neighbors by visiting local shops in person; much later, she flouted convention by casting off her veil in public. In her late thirties, Shaarawi became a leading figure in the Egyptian revolution against the British and one of the Arab world's first outspoken feminists. Although her memoirs of these active years are sketchy, her book is well worth reading



Huda Shaarawi in her twenties or early thirties.

for its rare portrayal of a strong-willed woman who flouted the conventions of the harem.



Harem Years

(The Memoirs of an Egyptian Feminist, 1879-1924)
Huda Shaarawi, 1987; 176 pp.

\$12.95 (\$15.95 postpaid) from
The Feminist Press, 311 E. 94th Street,
New York, NY 10128

I followed my mother into the sitting room, where we removed our *izars*, and sat down. Suddenly, she asked me why I had hidden the real cause of my unhappiness, whereupon I asked her what she meant. 'Are you still trying to keep the truth from me?' she asked. 'I know all about your husband's return to his former slave who is about to have a child.' When I heard that I clapped my hands with joy. I rushed to my companion and confidante and told her the news that would bring the end to my misery. Amazed by my reaction, my mother demanded to know if I was feigning joy to conceal my real feelings and hide the fact that I had known about matters all along. I swore that it was the first I had heard of it and assured her that my happiness was genuine. I confessed that I had been in misery and that my constant tears were proof of it.

At Cairo station one spring day in 1923, a crowd of women with veils and long, black cloaks descended from their horse-drawn carriages to welcome home two friends returning from an international feminist meeting in Rome. Huda Shaarawi and Saiza Nabarawi stepped out on to the running board of the train. Suddenly Huda — followed by Saiza, the younger of the two — drew back the veil from her face. The waiting women broke into loud applause. Some imitated the act. Contemporary accounts observed how the eunuchs guarding the women frowned with displeasure. This daring act signalled the end of the harem system in Egypt. At that moment, Huda stood between two halves of her life — one conducted within the conventions of the harem system and the one she would lead at the head of a women's movement.

Three Women of Herat

In this compelling memoir, Veronica Doubleday describes her friendships with three unusual Afghan women, who introduce her to their culture and customs and encourage her interest in traditional music. Mariam, the generous, levelheaded daughter of a respected musician, takes the author under her wing, initiating her into women-only events like visiting a shrine to fulfill a vow, negotiating a marriage proposal, and participating in a ritual to mourn a deceased parent. With Mother of Nebi, an embittered, temperamental woman but a brilliant singer, Doubleday begins her musical training, and also experiences the darker side of the secluded life. And finally, with Shirin, the head of an all-female band of singers of dubious (but unjustified) reputation, the author masters the intricate Persian songs sung at parties and weddings, and joins the band as a full-fledged performer. Full of rich anecdotes and detailed observations, this book is a loving tribute to three fascinating women and to a way of life destroyed by the Soviet occupation.



Three Women of Herat

Veronica Doubleday, 1990; 228 pp.

\$14.95 (\$16.45 postpaid) from University
of Texas Press, P. O. Box 7819, Austin, TX
78713-7819; 800/252-3206

The bridegroom's women placed a fine carpet on the platform and sat Azizeh down to undress her. She was limp and expressionless, allowing them to remove her clothes and dress her in a beautiful traditional *hamam* wrapper of red, gold and purple ikat woven silk. Then they undressed themselves, leaving only their underpants on. They led Azizeh into the adjoining room, which had a large cistern



A village wedding: women gather on the roof before making a procession to the bridegroom's house.



Women in a procession playing the *daireh*.

of hot water at the far end. We could see them through the doorway sitting in a semi-circle washing and shampooing Azizeh, scrubbing backs and rinsing one another with buckets of water.

I tried to imagine myself being washed by strange women who had become my mother-in-law, sisters-in-law and relatives. They were preparing their bride, knowing she would be in the arms of her husband that night. Azizeh submitted to their hands, showing no emotion. She was slim, barely mature, with fair skin and small round breasts. This bridal washing was a process of intimate familiarity with a new body, a new member of the family. I remembered once watching some other women considering a bride for their brother, opening her mouth and examining her teeth, calmly discussing her physical attributes, criticising her faults and praising her good points as though she were a young filly.

I did not know how much to believe of the Minstrels' scandalous reputation. I heard that they practised free love and incest, that the women were prostitutes, and that the boys danced at illicit parties and sold their favours to men. In Herat there was a strong connection between dancing and prostitution: the Baluch people known as Chelu, who lived in white-tented encampments on the edge of the city, were musicians (playing their own special instruments), dancers, pimps and prostitutes, and some of the women who sang, danced and acted in the

government theatre were also courtesans. These facts led people to assume that the Minstrel women must also be available, though this proved not to be true.

Beyond the Veil

If you're interested in a feminist analysis of Islam — by a Muslim feminist — Fatima Memissi's groundbreaking book is the place to start. First published in 1975, this engrossing book examines sexual dynamics in Islamic history and illustrates how prevailing ideas about women have evolved into modern laws and customs.

In one of the most fascinating chapters, Memissi contrasts traditional Muslim notions of female sexuality with Western concepts, and shows that many Muslim scholars have characterized women's sexuality as active, aggressive, and potentially threatening to the social order. The result is that much of Islamic social structure is organized to control women through institutions like seclusion and veiling. In other words; suggests Memissi, the position of women in the Muslim world is due not to their "inferiority" but to their perceived potential to create chaos.

Memissi examines how such beliefs create tensions in the modern Muslim

world, especially as women seek employment and a larger role in public life. Her new introduction to this revised edition also provides a myth-shattering look at the recent rise of Islamic fundamentalism and the role of women in the ranks.



Beyond the Veil

(Male-Female Dynamics in Modern Muslim Society)

Fatima Memissi, 1987; 200 pp.

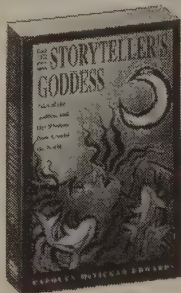
\$8.95 (\$11.95 postpaid) from Indiana University Press, 601 N. Morton Street, Bloomington, IN 47404; 812/855-4203

In this book I want to demonstrate that there is a fundamental contradiction between Islam as interpreted in official policy and equality between the sexes. Sexual equality violates Islam's premise, actualized in its laws, that heterosexual love is dangerous to Allah's order. Muslim marriage is based on male dominance. The desegregation of the sexes violates Islam's ideology on women's position in the social order: that women should be under the authority of fathers, brothers, or husbands. Since women are considered by Allah to be a destructive element, they are to be spatially confined and excluded from matters other than those of the family. Female access to non-domestic space is put under the control of males.

Paradoxically, and contrary to what is commonly assumed, Islam does not advance the thesis of women's inherent inferiority. Quite the contrary, it affirms the potential equality between the sexes. The existing inequality does not rest on an ideological or biological theory of women's inferiority, but is the outcome of specific social institutions designed to restrain her power: namely, segregation and legal subordination in the family structure. Nor have these institutions generated a systematic and convincing ideology of women's inferiority. Indeed, it was not difficult for the male-initiated and male-led feminist movement to affirm the need for women's emancipation, since traditional Islam recognizes equality of potential. The democratic glorification of the human individual, regardless of sex, race, or status, is the kernel of the Muslim message. ☞

The Storyteller's Goddess

This is the only book of fairytales that my daughter will actually stay awake to listen to. One reason is that the stories are short — one or two pages apiece. Another reason is that the stories are all about female heroes and deities, and almost all fairytale books are about kings and princes and knights on horseback. It also offers a good perspective on the universality of Goddess stories, and the many varieties of female-centered spirituality around the world, from Egypt to Oceania, Central America to Japan.
—Howard Rheingold



The Storyteller's Goddess

Carolyn McVickar-Edwards, 1991; 208 pp.

\$10.95 (\$13.70 postpaid) from HarperCollins Publishers/Direct Mail, P. O. Box 588, Dunmore, PA 18512; 800/331-3761 (or Whole Earth Access)

Lilith

Lady of the Air (Middle East)

Introduction

Related to the Sumerian Goddess Ninlil, Lady of the Air Who Gave Birth to the Moon, Lilith, Hand of Inanna (see story), is identified with the lily or lotus. The lily is the Great Mother's flower Yoni, which begets Herself and the world (see stories of Juno and Astarte). The sweeping sexuality of Her Person characterizes the endless mysteries of growing things over which She once unquestionably ruled. Her powers, however, were politically unacceptable to the nomadic tribes who coveted the fields of Her farming peoples. The nomadic storytellers, therefore, invented a degrading biography for the Lady of the Moon.

Except inasmuch as Her image was collapsed into that of Lucifer, the Goddess Lilith lost Her place entirely in the Judeo-Christian Bible. In both Eve and the serpent, biblical writers subverted images of the Creator Goddess honored by earlier Middle Eastern creation myths. In Eve, they reduced the One Who is Complete to wife of the first man, subordinate and obedient, experiencing sexuality for procreative purposes only. The snake, who possesses the secret of the Tree of Knowledge, is a disguised and diabolized version of the God-

dess Herself. And Eve's very rebellion hints of the wisdom of the Great Feminine.

Rabbinical writers, on the other hand, retained the Divine Lady in the form of the Night Hag in the mystical book of the Kabbalah (see story of the Shekina). They wrote Lilith Herself into the script — as Adam's first wife. She refuses to do Adam's bidding, however, and flies away when he insists that She forego Her ancient position of pleasure and lie beneath him. While God creates Eve, Adam's second wife, in this story, Lilith takes the form of a She-Demon who spends Her evenings in the beds of dreaming men, milking them for nightly ejaculate and making of their sperm a hundred new demons a day. Beautiful temptress She is, they tell us, with long waving hair and claws for feet, like a bird of prey (see story of Cerridwen).

It is easy to see Eve and Lilith as two Sisters, both degraded versions of the Goddess who, split from each other, represent two halves of a once-sacred sexual whole. Eve is the Sister of Pregnancy and Motherhood; Lilith is the Sister of Menstruation and Independence. Integrated, They represent a body of wisdom that scorns the intellectualization of truth. Penelope Shuttle and Peter Redgrove have helped me to understand the connection of Eve and Lilith through their book, *The Wise Wound: Menstruation and Everywoman*.

I wrote Lilith's story as a kind of political cartoon, playing with the biblical creation myth's teaching that humans are to set themselves superior to the animals. Lilith, who can be represented by a juicy, saucy red apple, is the Goddess for me who lauds the kind of knowing that builds no hierarchy.

Inanna

Storyteller and folklorist Diane Wolkstein was looking for a "grand story of a woman" when she discovered translations of the 4,000-year-old cuneiform tablets recounting the cycle of Inanna, also called Ishtar. As she writes in her introduction, "Inanna's scribe, [Sumerologist and cuneiformist] Samuel Noah Kramer, gave me her words. I have sung them as best as I can. Now, we pass them on to you." What they pass on is the story of Inanna's coming of age; her courtship and marriage; the deal (some might say swindle) with the God of Wisdom that won her the entire Order of the Universe, the dharma, the way it is; and the descent to, and return from, her dark sister's underworld, *The Great Below*. The story is as compelling and accessible now as it was back in ancient Sumer (southern Iraq). —Karen Smith

Inanna is Queen of Heaven and Earth, but she does not know the underworld. Until her ear opens to the Great Below, her understanding is necessarily limited. In Sumerian, the word for ear and wisdom is the same. The ear, which is located mostly internally and is coiled like a spiral or labyrinth, takes in sounds and begins to transform the imperceptible into meaning.

At that time, a tree, a single tree,
a *huluppu*-tree

Was planted by the banks of the Euphrates.

The South Wind pulled at its roots and ripped at its branches

Until the waters of the Euphrates carried it away.

I plucked the tree from the river;
I brought it to my holy garden.

I tended the tree, waiting for my shining throne and bed.

Then a serpent who could not be charmed
Made its nest in the roots of the tree,
The Anzu-bird set his young in the branches
of the tree,
And the dark maid Lilith built her home
in the trunk.

I wept.

How I wept!

(Yet they would not leave my tree.)

Inanna spoke:

"What I tell you

Let the singer weave into song.

What I tell you,

Let it flow from ear to mouth,

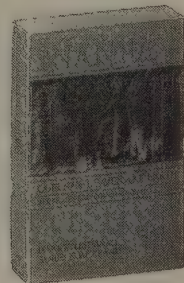
Let it pass from old to young:

My vulva, the horn,

The Boat of Heaven,

Is full of eagerness like the young moon.

My untilled land lies fallow."



Inanna

(Queen of Heaven and Earth)

Diane Wolkstein and Samuel Noah Kramer, 1983; 224 pp.

\$12 (\$14.75 postpaid) from HarperCollins Publishers/Direct Mail, P. O. Box 588, Dunmore, PA 18512; 800/331-3761 (or Whole Earth Access)

The First Woman and the Gift of the Moon

In the beginning was the woman Lilith and the man Adam. They were wife and husband and lived in a garden called Eden. The garden was so green it rested the eyes like a cool cloth. Its fruits were as many as the stars of the sky. Together Lilith and Adam grew to know the plants and animals they lived with and to lie together, quiet and joyful, under the whispering trees.

But one day Adam took an idea into his head. "Lilith," said Adam, "let's think up a name for each of the animals."

"I don't see a need for that, Adam. Seems like we're all just fine here without names," said Lilith.

But Adam liked his new idea, and he began to spend whole days picking just the right sound for each creature. All day he paced and thought and named animals. Even at dinner he continued his project.

One day Adam said to Lilith, "Lilith, have you ever noticed how big I am? Why, I'm way bigger than you. See?" Adam showed his muscles. "And look how tall I am."

Lilith looked quietly at Adam.

"Lilith, you know what my name is going to be?" said Adam. "King. King. I'm king of this garden."

"I don't like the sound of that, Adam," said Lilith.

"It doesn't really matter if you like the sound, Lilith," said Adam. "I am the biggest and the strongest. So you've got to do what I say."

"You know, Adam, there are other ways to measure bigness than in inches, and other ways to measure strength than in muscles," said Lilith.

"Oh, come on, Lilith," said Adam. "I'm the king, and you're my queen."

"That's not for me, Adam," said Lilith. "The way I see it is that we're all sisters and brothers in this garden. Each of us is as important as the other. Nobody's king and nobody's queen."

Adam didn't listen, so Lilith walked away. The third time Adam started the argument, Lilith took herself out of the garden. Through its gates she went and into the Netherworld. There she sat still and quiet in the dark.

Adam was so furious at Lilith's leave-taking

The Book of Lilith

Lilith is named as the "other woman" in Adam's life: the one who was too smart for him. Lilith also has other lives: she is a fraction of the old Goddess supplanted by you-know-what, and therefore the convenient screen for men's projections of unreasoned terror and hatred. She is Eve's more informed and sensuous sister. She is the free energy and wisdom of life that women need to acknowledge and claim in order to become whole. She is the demonic baby-killer that new mothers must ritually subdue. And she is the mad impulses that women must reckon with to complete the picture of the Goddess and their souls, for to deny this part is to

seriously limit self-knowledge.

The Book of Lilith gives Lilith room to dance some of her furious dances in a thesis-length book that culls images of her from old texts and amulets, as well as from current psychological perceptions.

—Robin Bishop



Eve and Lilith entwined, with Lilith whispering words of seduction to Eve, while Eve offers Adam the apple.

Because the letters of Lilith's name by the Kabbalistic practice of Gematria add up to the word "screech," Lilith is often called the demon of screeching. On the Day of Atonement, the holiest of holy days, it is said, Lilith spends the entire day in a screeching battle with Mahalath, a concubine of Samael's. They taunt each other there in the desert until their voices rise to heaven, and the earth trembles under their screams. One imagines that their screeching is intended to drown out the prayers of

that even when he married the woman Eve and had a family of children, he continued to fume against her. "Snake lover!" he spat. "Not a woman, but a demon!"

"Hush, Adam!" said Eve. "Not in front of the children!"

Lilith alone in the Netherworld grew large. She was going to have a child. Waiting for the child, She gathered a gift to give to the



The Book of Lilith

Barbara Black Koltuv, 1986; 142 pp.

\$9.95 (\$12.95 postpaid) from Samuel Weiser, Inc., P. O. Box 612, York Beach, ME 03910; 207/363-4393 (or Whole Earth Access)

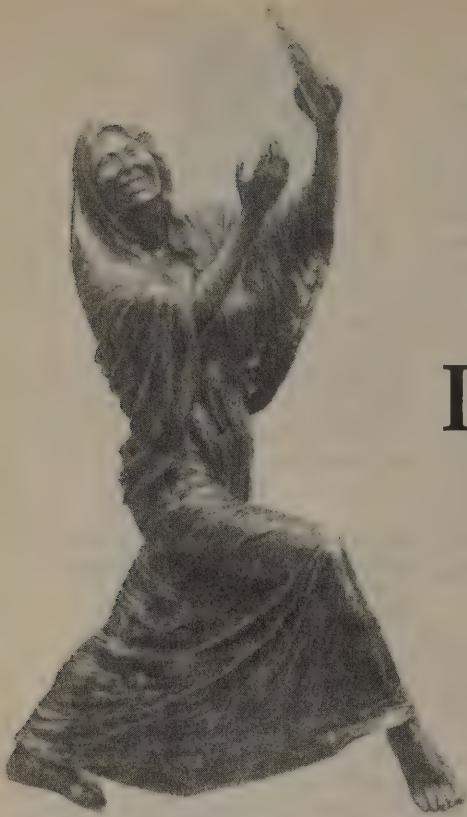
the righteous. Perhaps also, it is one more attempt on the part of Lilith to be heard by God, and to rise up out of her role as spiritual outcast.

Although Lilith the seductress is dangerous to people who are completely unconscious, for someone already on the path of consciousness, the encounter with the temptress Lilith can be transformative. Jung calls her a "shamanistic anima." He comments that, "Sophia cannot be brought together with Eve, since Eve has nothing to do with magic, but she [Sophia] probably can with Adam's first wife, Lilith." The adept meets Lilith when he is halfway up the philosophical tree. She is shown in figure 5 with her serpent tail and animal foot, upside down in the tree of knowledge. Similarly, she is described by the Kabbalists as "a ladder on which one can ascend to the rungs of prophesy."

Being the active, consciously seductive one in a relationship is a numinous experience for a woman. In Babylonian times, when the Goddess cultures flourished, Lilith was called "the hand of Innana." It was her duty to gather men from the street and bring them into the temple. She used her seductiveness in the service of the feminine Self. The Old Testament, documenting as it does the coming of the patriarchy, abounds with tales of women who use their Lilith seductiveness consciously to accomplish their ego goals.

sons and daughters of Adam and Eve. To a girl and a boy sleeping deep in a field She sent the dream of farming.

Soon after that dream was dreamed by the girl and the boy, Lilith had Her child. On a black night at the edge of the sea, hanging hard to the dark with Her hands and pushing against it with Her feet, Lilith gave birth to the Moon.



Feminism In Jewish Spirituality

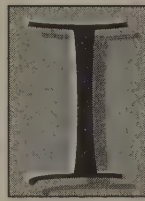
The patriarchal aspects of Judaism always turned me off as a kid: old men praying to another old man, with the women separated from the men by a curtain as they sat by themselves on the other side of the room. Males were supposed to thank God that at least they weren't born female.

When we started looking at women's spiritual traditions around the world, Adam Phillips got us in touch with Drorah Setel, a scholar, educator, writer and activist whose researches confirm that Jewish feminism is not a contradiction in terms, but rather an old, deep, little-known tradition.

Of Sephardic and Ashkenazic heritage, Setel is a founding member of B'not Eysh, a Jewish feminist spirituality collective, and New Jewish Agenda. She serves on the advisory boards of Tikkun magazine and the National Havurah Committee, and was Jewish Chaplain of Wesleyan University in 1989-90.

Setel creates a variety of rituals, celebrations, and scholarly works that weave together Jewish and feminist traditions. She has organized and led Rosh Chodesh groups, as well as a variety of traditional and new life-cycle rituals. She currently lives in Seattle, and is obtaining her doctorate in religious studies from Yale.

—Howard Rheingold



IN THE PAST TWENTY YEARS there has been a sometimes quiet, sometimes loud, but mostly unperceived revolution in North American Jewish spirituality, based on feminism. New prayers, rituals, and language to address divinity are some of the more obvious changes. Equally important are new forms of spiritual leadership, changes in communal authority, and even telling details such as services held in circles rather than hierarchically ordered arrangements. This article addresses some of the sources and implications of these transformations.

BY
DRORAH
O'DONNELL
SETEL

The development of contemporary Jewish feminist spirituality has rested on three approaches to tradition. The first is reinterpretation: a reexamination of known sources from feminist perspectives. On a philosophical level, Jewish feminists have found areas of significant convergence between Judaism and feminism. The most important of these is an underlying perception and valuing of interrelationship. Just as the basic feminist insight that "the personal is political" emphasizes the connections among all those aspects of experience we have been taught to see as separate and oppositional, the heart of Jewish theology is the affirmation of the unity of all being. Daily observances and communal authority, which are the basis of the rabbinic concept of *halachah* (literally, "pathway," but

usually translated as “Jewish law”) tie in well with feminist values of community and personal empowerment to create social change. Both perspectives reflect a desire to notice the extraordinary present in the mundane and to be aware of the daily choices involved in our lives, which constantly create and re-create the larger world. Finally, the link between personal liberation and social change implicit in the understanding that “the personal is political” has been a hallmark of Jewish thought since biblical times. In contrast to models of spirituality that emphasize detachment or otherworldliness, Jewish spirituality is rooted in the interrelationship among study (in the larger sense of learning and teaching), prayer (including reflection, shared visions and communal celebration), and social work for justice.

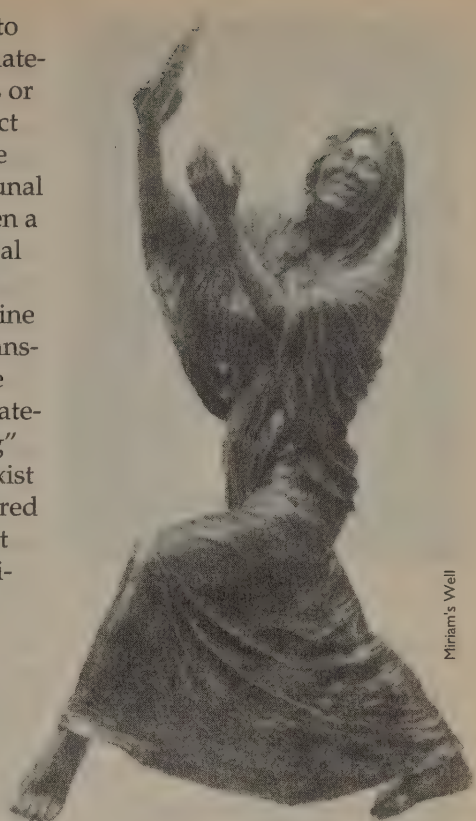
Feminist reinterpretation has also been applied to more obvious areas of Jewish history and texts. One way of doing this has been to look at known but disregarded evidence of Jewish women’s lives. Two important examples of historical reinterpretation are Bernadette Brooten’s demonstration of women’s leadership roles in the early synagogue movement and Chava Weisler’s reclamation of the body of Yiddish women’s devotional literature known as *techinās*. On a more popular level, Sondra Henry and Emily Taitz were pioneers in collecting and making accessible historical writings, including religious texts, by Jewish women from biblical to early modern times.¹

Textual reinterpretations have pointed to the absence of concern for female experience present in most biblical and rabbinic teachings. At the same

time, feminists have sought to identify and reclaim those materials based on women’s lives or those that have had an impact in areas such as reproductive rights, sexuality, and communal authority. There has also been a reevaluation of the theological implications of ancient texts. For example, the biblical divine name YHWH, commonly translated “Lord,” is a form of the verb “to be” and more accurately rendered “Source of Being” or “Creator.” In this case, sexist language has not only obscured a more inclusive concept, but has altered a traditional spiritual insight as well.

A second Jewish feminist approach is research and reconstruction in previously unexplored areas of women’s experience. Again, this serves to make visible that which has been hidden or ignored. Ethnographic studies of the religious practices and beliefs of traditional women, such as the use of amulets and rituals at Rachel’s Tomb, have contributed to a wider definition of Jewish heritage.² Customs that have been trivialized as “superstitions” or *bubbe meises* (Yiddish for “grandmothers’ stories,” i.e., “old wives’ tales”) illuminate women’s Judaism as part of a larger, ancient framework of popular traditions, in contrast to the official religion of the rabbis. Feminist reconstructions of the origins of Judaism in ancient Israel are another example of research that questions longstanding assumptions about the status of women and the nature of Jewish beliefs.

Despite the best efforts of those working to reinterpret and reconstruct Jewish women’s spiritual heritage, there are numerous areas in which we have no known sources of information



Miriam's Well

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Another central example of separatist ritual is the revival of Rosh Chodesh, the Jewish new-month observance, celebrated from ancient times as a women's festival. The beginning of the Jewish month comes at the new moon. Prior to urbanization, this phase of the lunar cycle would have marked the beginning of most women's monthly menstrual cycle.

about past experience. Imagination and invention are, then, the third approach to developing Jewish feminist spirituality. This aspect of emerging feminist Judaism acknowledges change and innovation as integral parts of the growth of our tradition. In addition, it serves to reject an apologetic view that ancient answers must be found for all contemporary questions. Lesbian commitment ceremonies, adoption rituals, rites to grieve sexual assault and abuse, miscarriage, the burial of a stillborn child, and becoming a stepparent are examples of experiences for which rabbinic tradition has not provided a precedent.

Like the secular feminist movement, which has influenced contemporary Jewish feminists, there are philosophical and strategic divisions within the movement. These differences can be summarized by three positions.

Historically, the first is a separatist perspective that stems from a belief in separate and distinct female and male spiritualities. Separatism represents a tradition, found in most societies, of sex-segregation: separate spheres of activity and influence for women and men. Within Judaism, separatist feminism brings together the women who are otherwise at the two furthest ends of the religious spectrum: extremely orthodox women and extremely radical separatist women.

In this context it is not surprising to find an emphasis on biological difference as a basis for ritual. Menstruation, fertility, pregnancy, birth, and menopause have been fruitful areas for the development of women's celebrations. One example of such a ritual is a mother and daughter inviting friends to bring the daughter gifts of "Woman Torah," women's wisdom and teachings, to give

to her as she entered the community of women. Another mother made a special necklace for her daughter to wear while she was menstruating and had a celebration when she gave it to her.³ Women have replaced wedding and baby showers with blessing rituals in which symbolic gifts as well as stories, poems and songs are presented. Those trying to get pregnant have been encouraged by feasts of red food and flowers or recreations of ancient rites invoking the soul of the yet-to-be-conceived child.

The separatist rituals that have probably had the greatest impact on contemporary Judaism are celebrations for the birth of a girl. Historically, eight days after a boy is born he was circumcised and given a name in a ritual called *brit millah*, the covenant of circumcision. Until about twenty years ago, there was no observance of covenant for girls. At that time, because of the influence of feminism, rituals such as a Simchat Bat ("daughter celebration") or Brit Chayim ("covenant of life") began; they are now considered standard practice among North American Jews. While fathers and other men often participate alongside women in these rituals, they represent a separatist philosophy in that they accept a "separate but equal" covenant for girls.

Another central example of separatist ritual is the revival of Rosh Chodesh, the Jewish new-month observance, celebrated from ancient times as a women's festival. The beginning of the Jewish month comes at the new moon. Prior to urbanization, this phase of the lunar cycle would have marked the beginning of most women's monthly menstrual cycle; it is probable that Rosh Chodesh

had its origins in menstrual separation. Today, there is little if any connection made between Rosh Chodesh and a celebration of menstruation. Rather, feminists have reclaimed the new moon as a time for building women's spiritual community — gathering for study, for celebration, for exploring and

renewing Jewish feminist spiritual practice in a variety of ways.⁴

In contrast to other religious traditions, such as Christianity or Buddhism, Judaism has no historical models of a women's spiritual community. Separatist Jewish feminism has broken sig-

nificant new ground in creating such communities. In addition to monthly Rosh Chodesh groups and a number of annual feminist retreat groups which have formed in the past decade,⁵ it is orthodox women who have pioneered ongoing communities. Women's prayer groups are the subject of much debate and controversy within the orthodox community. Although women are traditionally excluded from the *minyan* (the quorum of ten men required for public prayer), and women have to be separated from men during communal prayer, there is no regulation of what happens when just women get together. In rabbinic terms this situation is a "nonquestion." Orthodox women have entered these gaps in rabbinic regulation and created spiritual space for themselves. While declining to consider themselves *minyans* in their own right, the women's prayer groups engage in what some rabbinic authorities consider to be subversive and illegitimate activities by reciting the prayers and reading the texts allowed in the absence of a *minyan*.⁶

A second perspective is that of liberal Jewish feminism. As in other forms of liberalism, there is a model of equality in which women seek access to existing (male) institutions. Liberal Jewish feminist achievements include counting women in the *minyan*, the ordination of women rabbis, acceptance of women cantors and the institutionalization of bat mitzvah celebrations. While these innovations are of great significance, liberal Judaism has done little to address or critique the male orientation of the institutions and practices to which it has admitted women. It represents a transition between the older

In the Wake of the Goddesses

A long-needed antidote to the poorly researched picture of the ancient Near East present in much feminist writing, *In the Wake of the Goddesses* presents issues and information previously available only to scholars in the field. This work challenges popular assumptions that ancient societies can be simply characterized as "matriarchal" or "patriarchal" or that the worship of female deities has any specific implication for women's status. Frymer-Kensky also presents a provocative reconstruction of the origins of biblical monotheism and its eventual — not immediate — rejection of female deities. Unlike many other feminists who have approached the topic, Frymer-Kensky addresses the necessity of questioning the applicability of contemporary notions of sex and gender to ancient Near Eastern societies, and is admirably willing to acknowledge areas of ambiguity and confusion. While some readers may disagree with the book's apologetic stance concerning biblical monotheism and its implications for women, *In the Wake of the Goddesses* adds a much-needed sophistication to feminist inquiry into the history of religions.
—Drorah O'Donnell Setel

of manhood, does not enable women to transcend their femaleness. In her being and her cult (where she changes men into women and women into men), she provides an outlet for strong feelings about gender, but in the final analysis, she is the supporter and maintainer of the gender order. The world by the end of the second millennium was a male's world, above and below; and the ancient goddesses have all but disappeared.

■ Throughout the Bible, in every aspect of biblical thought, human beings gain in prominence in — and because of — the absence of goddesses. In Israel's philosophy of culture, humans have a greater role in the development and maintenance of the array of powers, functions, occupations and inventions that constitute civilized life than they ever did in ancient Near Eastern myth. Biblical thought urges Israel to devote these powers to God-centered and God-willed activities, to organize the secular world in the direction of the holy. But the Bible recognizes that the origin of this secular world is indeed secular, that humanity has created civilization and continues to develop it.



In the Wake of the Goddesses

Tikva Frymer-Kensky, 1992; 292 pp.

\$24.95 postpaid from Macmillan Publishing Company, 100 Front Street, Riverside, NJ 08075; 800/257-5755 (or Whole Earth Access)

■ The eclipse of the goddesses was undoubtedly part of the same process that witnessed a decline in the public role of women, with both reflective of fundamental changes in society that we cannot yet specify. The existence and power of a goddess, particularly of Ishtar, is no indication or guarantee of a high status for human women. In Assyria, where Ishtar was so prominent, women were not. The texts rarely mention any individual women, and, according to the Middle Assyrian laws, married women were to be veiled, had no rights to their husband's property (even to movable goods), and could be struck or mutilated by their husbands at will. Ishtar, the female with the fundamental attributes

sex-segregated understanding of human nature and a newer, more radical view that seeks a Judaism inclusive of female as well as male experience.

This inclusive perspective is the third approach to Jewish feminism. Rejecting the notion that biology is spiritual destiny, it envisions a community in which men transform their practices and beliefs to incorporate women's experience as well as one in which women participate in rituals established by men. This perspective does not assume that there is an inherent female spirituality distinct from male spirituality, but allows for a variety of possibilities without predetermination on the basis of sex. Within such a context rituals based on biological differ-

ence are rejected as contributing to sexist socialization. Instead there is an emphasis on a common lifecycle — for example, birth and entry into Jewish community; the start of formal education; puberty; establishing one's own household; making family; celebrating accomplishments; illness; transitions such as divorce, change or loss of employment, moving from one community to another; aging; and death.

One example of a lifecycle event based on this inclusive philosophy is an aging ritual called Simchat Chochmah (Celebration of Wisdom). The person who created it, Savina Teubal, did so to observe her sixtieth birthday. There are different ways others have developed it since, but the

ritual was constructed around several basic elements. One was taking on a new name, which in Jewish tradition is done at a significant change of life. Another was putting on a garment called a *kittel*, which in orthodox communities men get when they get married. The *kittel* is a plain white garment worn for festivals; at death, it is used as a shroud. Within the Simchat Chochmah there is, therefore, an acknowledgment of death. Another element is planting a tree — a symbol of hope for the future. In Jewish tradition, trees are planted when children are born with the understanding that just as those who came before us planted for us, so we will plant for the future, even if we don't personally benefit from the fruit of our labors.

Miriam's Well

This is an excellent introduction to, and an indispensable resource for, Jewish women's rituals. Penina Adelman has been a pioneer in the development of Rosh Hodesh celebrations. This volume includes Adelman's work as well as gleanings from creative Jewish ritualists throughout North America and Israel. A short introductory section gives the his-

torical context of Rosh Hodesh celebration. Most of the book consists of detailed monthly rituals, including formats, texts, midrash (explanatory stories), blessings, songs and discussion topics. The chapter on "Starting a Group" and the resource lists in the third section will be especially useful to those for whom this book is a first contact with Jewish feminist ritual.

A companion tape, "A Song A Month (Hodesh Hodesh B'Shir)," by Adelman and Suri Levow Krieger, is available from the same publisher.

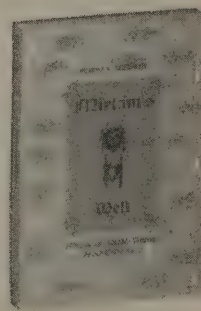
—Drorah O'Donnell Setel

seventh year in the counting of Jewish years — when the earth rests, a Sabbath of the land.

We mark this New Year of the Trees in the middle of Winter, in Shvat. In Israel, there is already a hint of Spring to come.



Many *Tefillah* (prayer) groups are now active with women of all ages, in both traditional and modern services, where reading from the Torah on Shabbat and rejoicing with it has become popular.



Miriam's Well

(Rituals for Jewish Women Around the Year)
Penina V. Adelman, 1990; 167 pp.
\$10.95 (\$12 postpaid)

A Song A Month

\$9 (\$10.05 postpaid)
Book and tape **\$19.43** postpaid
from Biblio Press, 1140 Broadway/Room 1507, New York, NY 10001; 212/684-1257 (or Whole Earth Access)

Finally, the celebrant gives a teaching out of the wisdom of their age. In addition to modeling an inclusive lifecycle ritual, the Simchat Chochmah observance works to reclaim respect and honor for elders. For women especially, celebrating old age as an honorable and important stage in their lives goes against both the sexism and ageism in contemporary North American culture.⁷

While separatist, liberal, and inclusive Jewish feminism have been presented here as distinct positions, in reality they are often combined in a single community or in the life of an individual. For example, a specific synagogue may have a female rabbi and a women's Rosh Chodesh group, and celebrate

retirement rituals. At the same time, it is important to understand that Jewish feminism is a diverse and divergent movement in which conflicting beliefs and goals may underlie shared practices.

In one way or another, however, all Jewish feminists have come to understand that not only the personal but the spiritual is political. The controversy and resistance engendered by feminist initiatives have clarified several related issues.

One is that what is accepted as ritual and liturgy in a community is based on who has the authority to make it authoritative. The spiritual traditions of a given community are therefore a reflection of the power structure of that community. Who

gets to write the prayers? Who gets to define what the authentic rituals are? Who gets to use their experience as the basis for spiritual norms?

Related to these questions is an understanding that all language about divinity — all theological language — is about power. Familiar traditional metaphors used in ritual and liturgy depict the power of a king over subjects, a shepherd over the flock, a father over children. Other historical traditions (especially those of the mystics), as well as those of contemporary feminists, emphasize immanent aspects of deity as friend, intimate, lover, companion. These also say something about relationships of power and the value they hold.

(She shows a delicate vase of lavender Jerusalem glass containing a white flowering twig.)

This is a branch of the almond tree. It is called *sha-ked*, "watcher," because it is the first tree to blossom each year. It "watches out" for Spring.

Now is the time to hear, feel, and smell the sap starting to thaw and flow again.

By celebrating *Tu B'Shvat* with women only, we'll discover some of the feminine aspects of growth. We have decided to make this Sabbath for women, starting tonight with the *Tu B'Shvat seder* and continuing tomorrow on *Shabbat Shirah*, the Sabbath of Song. Then we'll read in the Torah about the crossing of the Sea of Reeds and chant together *Shirat Ha Yam*, the Song of the Sea. Tonight our women's seder will be devoted to stories, songs, meditations and foods linking women and trees.

• At twilight on the second day of Creation, God embedded a precious liquid jewel in the earth, a miraculous well of pure, sparkling water. From one generation to the next, the well belonged to those who knew how to draw up its water. Filled with *mayim chayim*, living waters, the well was a reminder to all who drank or drew from it, that Torah, the way of the Jewish people, is also a well from which all may drink and be restored. —from the Legend of Miriam's Well



Celebrating the big Rosh Hodesh — Rosh HaShanah (Tishre).

In one way or another, all Jewish feminists have come to understand that not only the personal but the spiritual is political.



Dancing and singing with the bride-to-be (Elul).

For some Jewish feminists, the older, hierarchical modes of power depicted in ritual and liturgy (king, father, shepherd) are not merely obsolete but harmful. Feminist theologians in many traditions have critiqued the oppressive nature of "power over" images of divinity. Jewish feminists, among others, argue that the time has come to stop replicating those models in our spiritual practice. ☪

1. Bernadette Brooten, *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue* (Scholars Press, 1982). Chava Weisler, "Voices from the Heart: Women's Devotional Prayers," *The Jewish Almanac* (Richard Siegel and Carl Rheins, eds.; Bantam, 1980). Sondra Henry and Emily Taitz, *Written Out of History* (Biblio Press, 1990).
2. For example: Susan Starr Sered, "Rachel's Tomb and the Milk Grotto of the Virgin Mary: Two Women's Shrines in Bethlehem," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* Vol. II, no. 2 (Fall 1986), pp. 7-22. (JFSR, cofounded by Jewish feminist scholar Judith Plaskow, consistently runs articles on Jewish women and religion. Subscriptions are available through Scholars Press, P. O. Box 1608, Decatur, GA 30031-1608.)

3. These rituals were conceived by Phyllis O. Berman of Philadelphia, PA and Mary Gendler of Andover, MA, respectively.
4. Penina V. Adelman, *Miriam's Well: Rituals for Jewish Women Around the Year* (Biblio Press, 1990). The most comprehensive source for Rosh Chodesh material.
5. Martha Ackelsberg, "Spirituality, Community, and Politics: Bunot Esh and the Feminist Reconstruction of Judaism," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* Vol. II, no. 2 (Fall 1986), pp. 109-120, documents the early experiences of one group.
6. The women's prayer groups are being documented and analyzed from a feminist perspective by Rachel Adler, a doctoral student at Hebrew Union College in Los Angeles.
7. A videotape and booklet about Savina Teubal's Simchat Chochmah ritual are available from Sounds Write Productions, Inc., P. O. Box 19968, San Diego, CA 92119. Their catalogue has Jewish feminist music as well: Debbie Friedman's *You Shall Be a Blessing* includes several songs written for Simchat Chochmah and other new rituals. Another good liturgy resource is *Women Speak to God: The Prayers and Poems of Jewish Women* (Marcia Cohn Spiegel and Deborah Kremsdorf, eds.; The Women's Institute for Continuing Jewish Education, 1987).

Standing Again at Sinai

The first systematic Jewish feminist theology and a milestone marking nearly twenty years of reflection and activism, **Standing Again at Sinai** addresses an astonishing range of issues related to Jewish spirituality and identity. Judith Plaskow reworks the traditional rabbinic categories of God, Torah, and Israel, using both reinterpretation and new, female-centered resources to explore concepts of divinity, spiritual teaching, community, and peoplehood. Later chapters articulate feminist understandings of spirituality's inextricable ties to sexuality and social justice. Of particular interest to a general readership is Plaskow's discussion of the relationship between sexism and the concept of chosenness, specifically with regard to the modern State of Israel.
—Drorah O'Donnell Setel

■ If we are to take seriously, however, the importance of community in human life, we cannot repeat in relation to Judaism the liberal feminist mistake of seeing women as individuals who happen to be discriminated against in the Jewish system. If women fight for equality on liberal terms, then we will gain access to a community that structures its central ideas and institutions around male norms, without changing the character of those ideas or institutions. Women in Judaism — like women in any patriarchal culture — are rendered invisible as a class; we are seen as Other as a class; we are deprived of agency as a class. Until we understand and change the ways in which Judaism as a system supports the subordi-

Twice Blessed

A diverse anthology, *Twice Blessed* nevertheless appears to have an unintentional theme of spirituality in the larger sense of sources of inspiration and empowerment. Autobiographies, historical research, essays on parenting, identity, community, family, homophobia and activism all address issues and offer models for those who, whether or not they identify as lesbian or gay, seek a progressive Jewish spirituality. Two chapters focus specifically on ritual (one describes a commitment ceremony and the other reviews gay and lesbian Jewish liturgy), and another on biblical prohibitions against homosexuality. The appendices provide resources for Jewish educators on homosexuality and homophobia. Other sections of the book

refer to religious experience and theological issues. —Drorah O'Donnell Setel

There are other positive and valuable aspects to my identity as a lesbian and my work as a rabbi. I believe that I am more sensitive to "the stranger who walks in our land," those Jews who sit at the edges of our communities, somewhat marginalized, somewhat outside of the mainstream. I believe that I may be more attuned to them because I, too, often feel like an outsider, unable to reveal my full self to my community. I believe that because many people judge me and my lesbian identity harshly, I may be more sensitive to judgmentalism in general. I have learned that there are many, many ways of living one's life as a decent human being — and that my re-

sponsibility is not to judge but to establish human connection. I believe, as Abraham Joshua Heschel once wrote, that "my first task in every encounter is to comprehend the personhood of every human being I face, to sense the kinship of being human, the solidarity of being."

Many lesbian and gay Jews are spiritually and emotionally drained by the need to lie or to take other steps to pass as heterosexual. Having come out in order to make ourselves whole, many of us are once again fragmented by the need to hide. Like so many Jews before us, in our hour of worship we seek to affirm and strengthen our true identity. The following prayer is from the Friday evening service of Congregation Beth Simchat Torah in New York City:

O God of truth and justice, the evasions and deceptions we practice upon others and upon ourselves are many.

We long only to speak and to hear the truth, yet time and again, from fear of loss or hope of gain, from dull habit or from cruel deliberation, we speak half-truths, we twist facts, we are silent when others lie, and we lie to ourselves.

As gays, we often feel forced to pretend to be that which we are not, to present ourselves in ways which are not truthful, and sometimes with outright lies.

But as we stand before You, our words and our thoughts speed to One who knows them before we utter them. We do not have to tell untruths to You as we are often forced to do in the straight world. We know we cannot lie in Your presence.

May our worship help us to practice truth in speech and in thought before You, to ourselves, and before one another; and may we finally complete our liberation so that we no longer feel the need to practice evasions and deceptions.

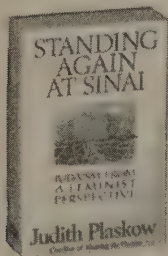
nation of Jewish women as a subcommunity within the Jewish people, genuine equality of women and men is impossible.

The real challenge of feminism to Judaism emerges, not when women as individual Jews demand equal participation in the male tradition, but when women demand equality as Jewish women, as the class that has up until now been seen as Other. To phrase the feminist challenge to Judaism in an other than liberal way, we might say that the central issue in the feminist redefinition of Israel is the place of difference in community.

The use of female imagery, then, so far from "sully" monotheism, becomes a test of whether Jews are able to sustain a genuinely monotheistic framework. Is our God sufficiently God that we are able to incorporate the feminine and women's

experience into our understanding of divinity? It is true that multiple images of God involve certain hazards, but the Jewish tradition has faced these hazards before and has developed ways to deal with them. A wonderful passage in *Pesikta Rabbati*, discussing the many guises in which God has appeared to the children of Israel, responds to the "whoreson" who insists that the guises are different gods. Say to him, it says, "I am the One of the sea and I am the One of Sinai." Extending this reply, feminists need to assert that the full range of images for God we have tested and will test are also different guises of the same One. Indeed, the capacity to see the One in and through the changing forms of the many, to glimpse the whole in and through its infinite images, is finally what monotheism is truly about.

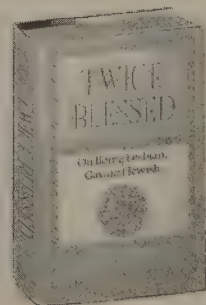
I have argued throughout this book that ideas and structures within Judaism that reflect and foster models of domination — a Torah that mirrors and reproduces the power of men over women, an Israel that in conception and communal form constructs difference as hierarchy, a notion of God as dominating Other, a legal structure that defines sexuality in terms of possession — must be reconstructed on the basis and for the sake of a different mode of relation. A spirituality that emerges out of the vision and sometime reality of diverse, egalitarian communities, that knows God as present within — not above — community as its binder, sustainer, and goad, can nourish and is nourished by the critique and transformation of all structures of oppression.



Standing Again at Sinai

Judith Plaskow, 1990; 282 pp.

\$14 (\$16.75 postpaid) from HarperCollins Publishers/Direct Mail, P. O. Box 588, Dunmore, PA 18512; 800/331-3761 (or Whole Earth Access)



Twice Blessed

Christie Balka and Andy Rose, Editors. 1989; 228 pp.

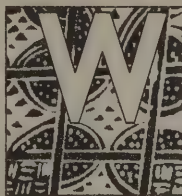
\$14.95 (\$17.95 postpaid) from Beacon Press, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108; 617/742-2110 (or Whole Earth Access)



WEDDING IN CAMEROON

BY KARON HYMAN

Richard Sassaman sent us this article with a note that said, "My friend Harris's wife Karon died suddenly in January 1991. In the course of selling his house and uprooting his family, he came across this letter and gave me a copy. Karon Hyman was a counselor and quiltmaker who lived with Harris and six children in Lamoine, a small town on the Maine coast." This account of her stepdaughter's 1988 marriage to an African from Cameroon has been read by the story's bride, Katrin Tchana, who corrected several factual errors. She and husband Eugene are currently living in Burlington, Vermont, where Eugene is studying computer science and Katrin teaches English-as-a-second-language to refugees from the former Soviet Union. They have a son, Michou. —Richard Nilsen



WE ARE NOT SOPHISTICATED JETHOPPERS: that banana catalog sells nothing to fit us. We were not ordinary tourists, however, for we had come as recipients of an extraordinary privilege and opportunity: we were going to a wedding which would join our family with an African family, and with a whole tribe.

Harris's daughter, Katrin, had just completed her third year as a Peace Corps volunteer, teaching English in a town called Bogo in northern Cameroon. While there, Katrin had met a young Camerounais, Eugene Tchana, who was serving as an outreach coordinator for USAID. Katrin and Eugene fell in love and made plans to marry.



Harris and Katrin's mother, Trina Schart Hyman, had gone to Africa and met Eugene, who received their full approval as a future son-in-law. I had met Eugene when he came to the US the following summer. We were all impressed with Eugene's character and personal charm, and the loving, supportive character of his and Katrin's relationship. We felt that if anyone could surmount the challenges of an international, intercultural, interracial marriage, these two were the ones to do it.

However, Katrin's marriage to Eugene was not a simple thing to arrange. In addition to being a very nice person, Eugene was also an extremely well-connected young man — a condition which posed more problems than it solved.

Tribal connections and culture are extremely important in Cameroon. While Cameroon is politically a constitutional democracy, the power-brokers are the traditional tribes. Eugene's mother is connected to the family of a Bamileke chief. His uncle is chief of another small village. As the eldest son of the Tchana family, Eugene is in line to become head of the family after his father. While legally Eugene could easily marry anyone at all, he and his wife would be subjected to loss of status if they did not receive the prior approval of the tribal elders; in tribal Africa, as in the US, it's who you know that counts. By custom, Eugene and Katrin were obliged to make a special trip to Bangangte, Eugene's ancestral home, to meet the tribal elders and receive their blessing.

But after much discussion, Eugene's family decided that Katrin and Eugene need not go to Bangangte because it was so far away. Instead, Eugene's mother would make a special trip on his behalf after the wedding. However, many of Eu-

gene's relatives decided to make the trip to Douala to meet the new bride.

This made it important that as many of Katrin's relatives and friends as possible should get to Africa for the wedding, so that the bride could demonstrate that she, too, had strong family support. There would be eight of us: Harris and me; Trina and her friend Barbara Rogasky; Harris's sister Sherry Miller and her son Marco; and Katrin's childhood friend Michael O'Donnell, with his friend John Quimby. Eugene's American friend Jennifer and her young son Timmy would also be there.

So that Katrin could apply for immigration status for Eugene, they had been legally married by the mayor of Maroua the previous winter. However, a civil marriage is of little importance in the eyes of the tribe; to establish Katrin's standing in the tribal and familial succession, a tribal wedding must still be held. The day after we landed, 300 or so people would be arriving in Douala for festivities which would begin at daybreak and would not end till the next dawn.

We had chosen our airline carefully, with a view to both price and reputation. You can save as much as \$1,000 by taking one of the lesser-known African airlines. However, you have to check out that African carrier. We heard, for instance, that Air Nigeria is in such dire financial straits that it has a habit of canceling flights in midair: when, arriving at the destination, the pilot notices the repo man waiting to nab his plane, he does a 180° and you end up back where you started!

Air Afrique, however, is just fine. The national airline of Senegal, its safety record is good, and so is the food. We felt we had chosen well, even though they did play that awful Safari song every time we took off or landed.

Emerging into the huge, stifling tropical-monstrosity airport (designed by a mad architect for air conditioning he knew they couldn't afford), we waited, tired and cranky, as they unloaded our bags at the rate of one trip per bag. As I prepared to collapse in tears, a beautiful sight loomed before me: Eugene! He hugged us, gathered our bags and whisked us through customs. Trina waited to greet us outside, where the air was fresh and cool, with a sprinkle of rain, for the rainy season had just begun. We were to pay a brief call at the Tchana compound before going to our hotel.

When you visit a traditional African family, the first thing they do is ignore you. This takes some getting used to. You are escorted to chairs ranged around the wall of the living room, and you are expected to sit and wait quietly until you are "noticed" by your hosts.

Actually, the custom makes perfectly good sense. In a society where people live in isolated small villages with few means of communication, and where even now few private homes have telephones, it is not possible to announce your visit ahead of time. So, as a matter of courtesy, the visitor is expected to allow the family time to get their act together, to finish bathing or making love or whatever, to make a proper welcome.

So, for about half an hour, we sat. The rain had become a gully-washer, and was blowing in the grilled windows. We propped pieces of tin and cardboard in the windows. No one seemed to mind the rain: in a concrete house, you just sweep the puddles out the door. Finally, after his day of agonized waiting, Etienne Tchana "noticed" us, with great delighted flourishes of welcome. The whole family came in to shake hands and say "Bonsoir." In Africa, you



shake hands with everyone in sight at every possible opportunity. The tiniest children are taught to shake hands and greet visitors politely.

Refreshments were brought in and the first of many welcoming speeches was made. Mme. Tchana — a sweet-faced, buxom mother of twelve — had gone to bed with “a touch of malaria” (a disease which Africans take too casually for my comfort), but she arose and came to greet us too, wearing in a shawl.

WE HAD BEEN TOLD to rest up before the wedding, as our part in the festivities would not actually begin until about 9 PM, when as guests of honor we would enter to take our places under the canopy set up in the Tchanas’ courtyard.

The food preparations were monumental. Mountains of goat meat had been roasting on charcoal grills outside. Katrin and Eugene had bought six goats in Bogo, had them slaughtered there and had the meat shipped down to Douala by air.

The Americans were worried about refrigerating the shrimp and the macaroni salad. Refrigeration was impossible (the Tchanas have only a tiny refrigerator). Would we all get food poisoning? Only we Westerners were worried. Africans are not wildly concerned about food poisoning: they just blithely exclaimed, “It’ll keep!”

Harris and I tried our standard entertainment of taking a stroll in the market. I was looking particularly for fabric; this is sold mainly in fixed-price stores in six-yard lengths. Almost all of this beautiful African fabric actually comes from the Netherlands!

African women dress much more beautifully than Western women. Why are we so timid? Africans dress as if they know the human body is

meant to be decorated; each woman is her own designer. There seems to be an appreciation for the fact that large women can be as beautiful as little ones: great big ladies drape themselves gorgeously, proudly, instead of skulking around ashamed of their bodies as they do in the US.

We ambled down a side street to find a little open-air restaurant where we lunched on *n’dole*, shrimp, and rice, and “33” beer (familiar to anyone who has visited former French colonies — like Vietnam). *N’dole* is a mixture of finely chopped greens cooked with a paste of peanuts and meat or fish. As my stomach got tetchier, I found myself less able to digest it. Little kids eat this from babyhood, so they get plenty of greens.

Speaking of tetchy stomach, everyone got it except Harris (who probably has a teflon stomach liner). I am beginning to believe you may as well start ingesting Pepto-Bismol the day you leave home: no matter how careful you are about what you eat and drink, you will get it. I suspect black Africans think “white” tourists come in shades of gray-green.

We were dressed for the wedding by 8 PM, expecting to be picked up and taken to the Tchanas’ for our grand entrance at 9. However, at 9 our escorts arrived to tell us there would be a delay, as the elders had not yet arrived from Bangangte. Finally around 10 we left for the wedding.

The scene was not at all what we had expected. We had anticipated a milling throng under the big canopy in the courtyard. Instead, all was quiet. There were at least 300 people, and they were all sitting in orderly fashion in chairs around the perimeter of the tent: men on one side, women on the other. As we arrived, we were announced by a master of ceremonies, and music began. We were preceded

by eight dancing bridesmaids in pink taffeta. A dozen or so middle-aged women, all dressed in the same print fabric, waved palm fronds and horse-hair switches at us. (These were members of Mme. Tchana’s women’s club, whom I came to think of as the “horsetail ladies.”) The assemblage rose and applauded as the bridesmaids (dancing all the way) led us to our seats of honor — a half-dozen or so velvet couches behind small tables set with beverages, glasses, and bouquets.

There was a song of welcome, then speeches of welcome by M. Tchana and various dignitaries. After an hour had passed, the bride and groom made their grand entrance, preceded by the dancers. Following this, M. Tchana, Trina, and Harris gave speeches, which were translated rather badly — but everyone got the drift.

Then came the “ballet”: a beautiful production by the “horsetail ladies” who danced while Mme. Tchana sang a song of peace and love, at the end of which we were all in tears.

The guests of honor were then led up to the tables laden with food and invited to start the feasting. We were pretty hungry, as by then it was midnight! There were heaps of roast chicken and roast goat (topped by the goat’s head), platters of *n’dole* and boiled cassava (extremely bland and dry), shrimp, rice, macaroni salad, a hot-pepper sauce of which one drop can kill, and too much more.

One food that interested me was a glutinous substance wrapped in what looked to be seaweed, then baked: about the size of a breadstick. I was munching this thing wrapper and all, and finding it pretty tasty, but getting some amused looks. Later I noticed that Africans unwrap the glutinous stuff (which turned out to be man-

ioc), fold it and use it as a dipper for n'dole. The banana-leaf wrapper is thrown away.

Though the hour was quite late, we were holding up reasonably well. We knew we would be expected to stay the course: it would have been bad manners to leave before dawn. We had all been offered bits of kola nut by various people who claimed it would help us stay alert; we all took a nibble. Ghastly, bitter-tasting stuff: much like a caffeine tablet, and probably contains some related substance. Its effect is not bad: unlike caffeine, it doesn't give you the jitters, it just really makes you feel alert.

We had been briefed on etiquette by Eugene's sister Ernestine, who lives in Bamenda and speaks excellent English. One of the most difficult points to remember was never to cross our legs above the knee. This applies to both men and women: it is considered an insult to cross your knees when sitting across from someone. Eugene, who had acquired bad Western habits, had actually been fined for this at a meeting of his men's group.

I (old iron-belly) had begun to suffer a touch of the tourist malady, so Ernestine was summoned to escort me to the toilet. This was my first introduction to the Tchana's plumbing, and it is quite interesting. If I had plumbing like this in my house, there probably would be social workers knocking at my door, trying to take away the children. What it amounts to is a couple of little concrete rooms, reached by covered passages, built over deep pits — cesspools, I guess. These rooms have concrete floors shaped like shallow bowls, into which are molded holes centered in more shallow indentations. In each room there are large tubs of water, with buckets for dipping, so you can wash down the hole or whatever. The whole room can be easily cleaned just by sloshing it down with soap and water, so on a daily basis it is pretty clean and no smellier than any well-kept outhouse. Of course, with 300 people at this party — well, my bath-

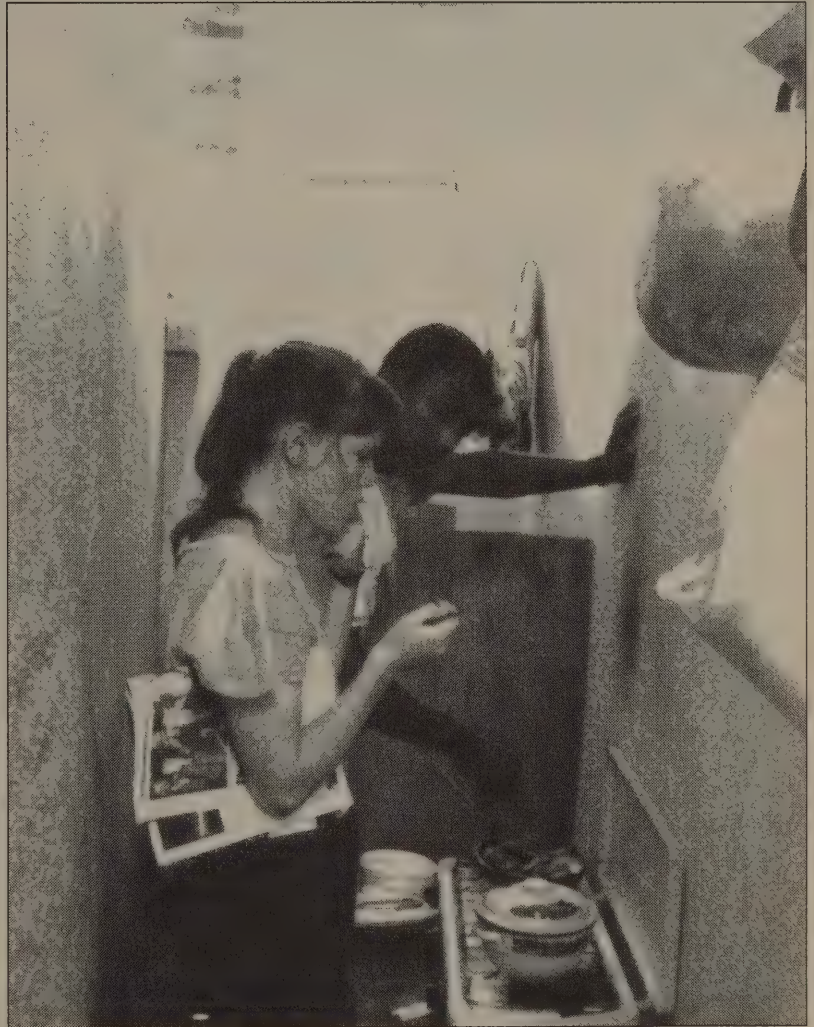
room wouldn't have held up, either. Harris thought he could avoid the little rooms by sneaking out into the bushes. Just as he unzipped, he felt a tug on his shirt. A young girl had noticed and concluded he didn't know where the toilet was. In a perfectly matter-of-fact way, she led him to the facility.

After the feast came the *bal d'honneur*: this amounted to a huge snake-dance, led by the horsetail ladies, who brought in first bride and groom, then all the rest of us, accompanied by various chants. Eventually the whole crowd was snake-dancing

around the room. When this finally ended, John remarked, "I think we've joined the tribe."

Then came the presentation of the bridesmaids. This interesting procedure involved each bridesmaid dancing up to the bride and groom and doing a little dance in place, while the master of ceremonies introduced her to the company and described her charms and accomplishments.

After their own presentation, the bridesmaids helped with the presentation of gifts to Katrin and Eugene, and finally M. Tchana announced that the formal ceremonies were at an



Katrin and Eugene Tchana in their kitchen in Maroua.

Barbara Rogasky



Sherry Miller

end. He told us that there would be "music till dawn" and invited us to dance all night.

Which, in fact, we did. It would have been impossible not to, as I was never allowed to sit down for more than a minute at a time, and it was impossible to say no. By this time we were pouring sweat, our clothes were soaked, and the skies were pouring too, so that periodically the canopy would unload gallons of water onto the dirt floor, turning it into a sea of red mud. Nobody cared. They just kept dancing. Our legs were muddy to the knees. We kept dancing. Too many kola nuts, I guess. Some wild local disk jockey served as MC and kept the place humming.

THIS IS AS GOOD a place as any to clarify the matter of relationships. What we found was that none of the relationships between the members of our party needed any clarifying, though we had expected to have to explain who was whose wife, ex-

wife, sister, son, lover, and so on. While monogamous marriage is the trend among modern Africans, everybody has polygamy in their background, at least in the last generation; in practice everybody in a tribe is related and often nobody is sure quite how. You are just family. Everybody is family.

We found that nobody questioned the nature of the relationships among Katrin's various relatives and friends. In fact, probably 75 percent of the wedding guests assumed that all four women were Harris's wives. Naturally, he did nothing to disabuse anyone of this notion.

Finally, at the conclusion of this incredible night, we realized that we, too, were family. The Tchanas and Hymans are one family. We belong. How wonderful! We have a tribe. Everyone should have a tribe. We left the party as the dawn broke, with tears and hugs, and promises to return — to our enormous African family.

On Monday afternoon we returned to the Tchana house for the giving of our gifts. After the present-giving, we all moved out to the courtyard for picture-taking. In this courtyard, the laundry is done and the dishes washed, all using a hand pump. The sky was rain-washed and turning pink, and the feeling of family intimacy and love was palpable.

All this time, a baby was being passed around from person to person. This little guy was about six months old and yummy! He confirmed my observation, made on planes, streets and at the wedding, that there are no brats in Africa. I have never seen such happy babies, such cheerful, well-behaved older children. All through the night of the wedding, little kids enjoyed the festivities and dancing, never screaming or making unreasonable demands. They were part of the action, and when they got tired — well, once I retreated to the Tchana living room for a few minutes, and there, on the con-



(Right) The groom, Eugene Tchana, with Hyman family friend Barbara Rogasky. **(Above)** Eugene's mother Lysette Tchana holds her grandson, Elvis. **(Opposite)** Members of Lysette Tchana's women's club (the "horsetail ladies") at the wedding ceremony.



crete floor, was a large sheet of cardboard. On the cardboard were several little boys, fast asleep.

I think we need to learn something from African society about the upbringing of children. In Africa, the large extended family seems to ensure that children receive all of the right kind of attention. This attention is matter-of-fact and easy; children are not given the excessive, anxious focus we tend to give, turning them into whiny houseplants. The only bratty kids we met were children of American missionaries.

The Tchanas must be doing something right: of their twelve children, every one is turning into a mature, responsible, well-functioning human being.

This may have to do with the respect accorded to the traditional family, and in particular to the mother of that family. Mme. Tchana is sweet and gentle, and her word is law. Etienne Tchana works very hard to support his family, as he feels a man should,

and he respects his wife for her role as matriarch. Mothers of families are given serious respect in Africa — much more respect than is given, for instance, to single career women: a clear contrast to prevailing attitudes in our country.

In restaurants, the waiter always asks the matriarch what the family will have to eat and drink. Whenever we Americans went out to eat, I was asked to order, and referred to as "Mama" — no doubt because I look the part. Finally, I get some respect!

It is difficult and probably silly to make generalizations about Africa or Cameroon on the basis of a week's visit. We did, however, get to see a side of African life unavailable to most tourists; some lasting feelings, or subjective impressions, remain with me.

Yes, Africans live differently from us. Materially, much worse — and spiritually, very possibly better. Yes, it does seem that they take life more as it comes, living more acceptingly

in the present. The prophet Muhammad said, "Trust in Allah and tie your camel." Africans, I think, are inclined to believe that if you just wait a bit, another camel will be along. There is a sense that life and nature are basically generous — so people can be, too.

In a bookstore we bought a Nigerian Home Economics textbook. It described quite neutrally the advantages of various kinds of families: monogamous nuclear, polygamous, extended — and how to raise babies, why they are best breastfed and carried on your back. And the book told mothers: "Some of your children will be bright and ambitious, some will be slow and stupid. You must love them all equally and accept them for what they are." Do we do better?

Katrin is no fumbler. She knows exactly what she is doing. She is phenomenally intelligent and could be anything she wants. She is, in fact, coming back to the US this fall, to do graduate work at Columbia with a



Barbara Rogasky

huge fellowship. Eugene will join her, to further his own schooling, and then they are going back to Cameroon to live. And have babies. Katrin has chosen the life of an African woman because she sees in it certain values that have become much less available to young women in this country.

I see those values too. I see values in the African way of life with which many Americans have never been acquainted. I cannot believe we could think we have anything to give Africa. The truth is, most of the Americans we saw in Africa were missionaries. Missionaries? The US has shunned Africa in terms of material exports; we've ignored them as a market. So they get everything — cars, appliances, computers, all technology — from Asia or Europe. They don't need us at all. So we send them — missionaries? I find the very concept of missionaries to Africa more and more ludicrous. Fortunately, most Cameroonians seem innately non-fanatical. They will accept whatever religion is around — Christian in the south, Muslim in the north,



Barbara Rogasky

(Above) The bride, Katrin Tchana, dances at her wedding. **(Left)** Katrin's stepmother (and this article's author) Karon Hyman does the same with Daniel Njiki.

tribal everywhere — but like most sensible people they take their religion in judicious doses, not letting it get out of hand. Mme. Tchana, like me, is a nominal Episcopalian: she makes it to services about once a year.

In general, what happens to missionaries is this: if they are really good people (which most of them are), they cease to worry much about making converts, because they get converted to Africa. Maybe Africa should send missionaries here. All



Barbara Rogasky

**Family matriarch
Lysette Tchana
carrying grandson
Michou Eymard.**

he had gotten her Telex. We hoped so too, and that she would be given some help with making her arrangements in New York should he not be there to meet her. We tried to give her whatever advice we could about how to cope. We last saw her in the long, long immigration line at JFK, while we, with our US passports, were whisked past. We hoped that our people would be as good to her as her people had been to us. We were not sure we could count on that.

It has changed me to find myself caring deeply about people eight thousand miles away, to have become a member of a family and tribe in Africa, to find my destiny bound up with theirs. Africa is so far away, and part of my heart truly remains there.

And then, on the other hand, maybe it isn't so far away — waiting for the airport bus to La Guardia, a ratty old car drives up, with a black guy who tells us he will get us there fast for only ten bucks. We decide to take him up on it. Meantime, he crams three other people, with luggage, in the car, and takes off like a true African driver. It turns out he is from — yeah — Liberia. "Making his way through school" . . . he says. Our fellow passengers, who have also come off Air Afrique, laugh with us in delight: the last African hustler! He gets us to La Guardia, just as the free bus also arrives. He has made quite a pile for a very brief drive. And Africa, clearly, has made it to the US.

Off the plane at Bangor, we find the people around us disconcertingly cheerless, dull, pale. We're glad to see the children, and I guess we're glad to be home — but Africa calls, in a way I am sorry to say Bangor can never do. Funny, I always hated to travel. Now I feel that wild-goose yearning: the hum of my computer puts me in mind of the whine of jet engines. I'm ready to go again, anytime: Africa is now my home, too. ☘

the nice missionaries we met were people who simply loved Africa. Being a missionary had become an excuse.

Finally, I find myself making comparisons of people, the people who manifest the basic values of a culture. Before we left New York, Harris and I lunched at the Plaza Grill. At the next table were a man and a woman in their thirties who, their conversation made clear, were yuppie investment bankers just getting acquainted. They were out of a *New Yorker* cartoon. Smooth, trendy, power-dressed, they talked billion-dollar projects, lifestyles, workstyles. They were young and rich, the world at their feet. They were revolting — utterly trivial people, for all the money and power they wielded. What would they do in life? Would they get married, have separate apartments in New York and Chicago? Have no children, probably — or one with a nanny? They would certainly have lots of money. As Harris and I eavesdropped on their conversation, we found it hard not to laugh.

On the other hand, I find myself caring very deeply about (for instance) the ladies in the market in Bamenda. I find myself reciting little litanies of blessing on them: May your children and cabbages thrive, your goats wax fat. May your eye retain its mischievous gleam when you smile on a stranger. May you always be able to feed your family, with enough left over for others. May you never be afflicted with missionaries, nor your enchanted forest be overrun by investment bankers. May your people live forever.

I find myself caring about the lovely young Nigerian woman — with three tiny, perfectly behaved children — whom we met in Abidjan, waiting for the plane to New York. It was hot, the children were thirsty. We gave them drinks of our mineral water. The young mother told us she was going to Etaka. Etaka? Yes, in New York, where her husband is a student at Cornell — Oh! Ithaca! She hoped her husband would be at Kennedy to meet her: he had known she was coming, but not just when; she hoped

Letters From Togo

I read Fulbright scholar Susan Blake's book twice: the first time quickly, with the appetite of a returned Peace Corps volunteer hungry to remember my own experience in Togo; the second time taking a more leisurely approach, as one might approach African cuisine, uncertain of what the sauce might hide. Shared experiences and common observations triggered long reveries of volunteer days.

My favorite chapter is that in which Blake describes an oral recounting of *The Color Purple*, and underlines the commonality of the reactions of the African women and those of their counterparts in the US.

I found Blake's book a satisfying combination of the familiar and the bizarre; the only thing I might note that she left out is that, in Togo, oranges are green. —Karen Polk

■ When another stranger showed up at the door yesterday and said, "Don't you remember me?" I was not encouraging.

"Don't you remember? I came here last September to ask for a job, and you said you didn't have a job for me, but you wished me luck. Now I've found a job and I've come to thank you for your good wishes." He gave me a card with a photograph of roses and a quotation from *Le Petit Prince*,

which I recognized because just a couple of weeks ago I saw a stage adaptation of it at the French Cultural Center. The quotation was the "secret" the Fox tells the little prince to sum up a lesson on what connects people to each other: "On ne voit bien qu'avec le coeur. L'essentiel est invisible pour les yeux." We see well only with the heart. What counts is invisible to the eye.

● When the dance floor had filled up, a little man came sliding in on his knees. You see quite a few people with shriveled legs in Togo, some from polio, some they say from misplaced injections that hit the sciatic nerve. The lucky few have hand-propelled tricycles; others propel themselves on wooden platforms with roller-skate wheels or drag themselves around on wooden blocks strapped to their hands. They sit with their legs folded under them at intersections in Lome where drivers stopped at a red light can't escape their imploring gestures.

At first I thought this man had come to beg. But no, he'd come to dance. He twisted his torso to the rhythm, his head at the height of other dancers' thighs. He looked painfully vulnerable, but the others made way for him and danced facing him for short periods before turning back to their partners. He beamed up at these temporary partners and they smiled down at him. The

Letters From Togo

Susan Blake, 1991; 179 pp.

\$12.95 (\$15.45

postpaid) from University of Iowa Press/Publications Order Dept., Oakdale Hall, Iowa City, IA 52242; 800/235-2665

man with shriveled legs seemed more at home at the dance than the girls clutching their soft drinks or Rene or Alioune or I.

■ Over a beer at my house afterward, Jon explained his approach to development: "We go into a bar and have a beer and just casually ask, 'Where's the hard-boiled eggs?' And a couple of weeks later we go back, and there's a plate of hard-boiled eggs."

I'd been thinking that to be comfortable in Togo, you have to be either impervious to Africa, like Callie and Trevor, or totally committed, like Jon. You can't straddle the gap between worlds as I'm trying to do. And yet, Jon straddles too. His wife and children and permanent address are African, but he has an American salary, and he doesn't let African men tease him out of wearing Bermudas. He's one of the guys in the bar, but he has the distance to mention hard-boiled eggs.

Ada, the Enchantress of Numbers

Will somebody intelligent like Stanley Kubrick please make a great movie about Ada, Lady Lovelace? Daughter of Lord Byron, companion and partner to Charles Babbage, and history's first programmer, Ada was one of the most picturesque characters in the history of technology, and one of the great eyewitness historians of technology. When Babbage designed and built automatic calculating devices, Ada, a mathematical prodigy, grasped the essence of using mathematical operations to control the operations of the machine. Ada's letters are some of the classic founding documents of cybernetics and computer science, written nearly a century before ENIAC, the first electronic digital computer. The U.S. Defense department named its standard software language after her.

Her personal life was colorful enough for Hollywood in the 1990s. Ada's friends included Dickens, Prince Albert, Wheatstone, and Faraday. Biographers have depicted her struggles with morphine addiction, her weakness for literally gambling the family jewels on the ponies. She was a twenty-first-century woman in Vic-

torian England, and most of what was written about her by others was colored by the way Ada went against the grain in an age when women who went against the grain were fed morphine tonic and put to bed. It might never be possible to sort out the myth and reality surrounding



Ada, the Enchantress of Numbers

Betty Alexandra Toole, 1992; 439 pp.

\$29.95 postpaid from Critical Connection, P. O. Box 452, Sausalito, CA 94966 (or Whole Earth Access)

Ada. She did, however, leave an extensive correspondence.

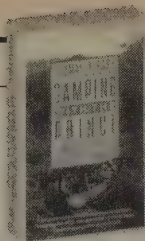
The editor of this annotated collection of Ada's letters — including her historic description of Babbage's "Analytical Engine" — lets Lady Lovelace speak for herself. The author enclosed a note to us with a review copy: "Whole Earth is partially responsible for this book. In 1983 when you were doing the *Software Catalogue*, I gave the editor a copy of a chapter in my dissertation on the history of calculating devices. When your editor saw what I wrote about Ada, he said 'I want to know more about her.' Little did I realize what an incredibly fascinating story it was, and here it is in Ada's words." —Howard Rheingold

■ The distinctive characteristic of the Analytical Engine, and that which has rendered it possible to endow mechanism with such extensive faculties as bid fair to make this engine the executive right-hand of abstract algebra, is the introduction into it of the principle which Jacquard devised for regulating, by means of punched cards, the most complicated patterns in the fabrication of

Camping with the Prince

Africa is a giant laboratory for inquiries into the extremes of the human condition. Its fecundity produced the earliest traces of human life and continues to throw up a bewildering diversity of life forms, from the cichlids of Lake Malawi to newly discovered viruses. Ancient native research into the metaphysical world produced a consistent system of communication with the spirits through drumming rhythms. History has since experimented with Africa's resources (slavery, colonialism, contemporary economic development, and environmental degradation). Modern scientific research delves into the product of all these factors.

In *Camping with the Prince*, Thomas Bass takes a leisurely tour through the laboratory, portraying projects ranging from the study of land-use patterns in Mali, through the uncovering of those cichlids and viruses, to innovative pest control in Kenya. Along the way, he visits experimental farms in Nigeria, and nomadic herders along the shifting borders of Kenya, Uganda, and Sudan. He also uncovers the links between the attitudes of the academic and economic institutions of the First World and the generally negative results of their policies, the need for scientists to include real-world



Camping with the Prince

Thomas A. Bass, 1990; 304 pp.

\$9.95 (\$11.95 postpaid) from Penguin USA/Cash Sales, 120 Woodbine Street, Bergenfield, NJ 07621; 800/253-6476

gender roles and economic abilities in their work, and the part played by politics in science. Despite this catalog of woes, the overall tone of the book is one of good news — these scientists are doing something in the face of great difficulty with generally positive outcomes.

—Jonathan Eveleigh

Like an economist checking for signs of inflation at the local grocery store, Jeremy queries the *laibon* on the price of maize meal and livestock. Nomads seldom live solely on the meat, milk, and blood of their animals, and the Turkana are no exception. A substantial part of their diet comes from trading animal products for grain. The price of cornmeal flour, or *posho*, is supposedly controlled by the government. But the

laibon confirms that the price actually floats up and down with supply and demand. As drought verges on famine, the value of animals falls to zero, while the price of *posho* doubles or triples.

"You see," Jeremy says to me, "the model works." He is referring to his hypothesis that a famine is not an accident of nature, catching the world by surprise, but the end of a long process with recognizable stages and countermeasures that can be taken all along the way. After fifteen years of watching them come and go, Jeremy thinks he has pieced together a theory of famine good enough to make it predictive, which also means preventive.

A parasite that kills its host endangers its own survival. As a result, selective pressure over time tends to produce more moderate pathogens. Antibodies and cultural responses also help to keep us out of harm's way. But it takes many years of association before a group of people and its diseases reach a state of balanced pathogenicity, and the isolation necessary to obtain this balance is becoming increasingly rare. As the world becomes a "global village," we are waking up to the fact that diseases spread as fast as information. Luc Montagnier is only half joking when he tells me that "the Boeing 747 is the vector of the AIDS virus."

brocaded stuffs. It is in this that the distinction between the two engines lies. Nothing of the sort exists in the Difference Engine. We may say most aptly that the Analytical Engine weaves algebraical patterns just as the Jacquard-loom weaves flowers and leaves.

[The Difference Engine] is in its nature strictly *arithmetical*, and the results it can arrive at lie within a very clearly defined and restricted range, while there is no finite line of demarcation which limits the powers of the Analytical Engine. These powers are co-extensive with our knowledge of the laws of analysis itself, and need be bounded only with our acquaintance with the latter. Indeed we may consider the engine as the *material and mechanical representative* of analysis, and that our actual working powers in this department of human study will be enabled more effectually than heretofore to keep pace with our theoretical knowledge of its principles and laws, through the complete control which the engine gives us over the *executive manipulation* of algebraical and numerical symbols.

The Analytical Engine, on the contrary, is not merely adapted for *tabulating* the results of one particular function and no other, but

for *developping and tabulating* any function whatever. In fact the engine may be described as being the material expression of any indefinite function of any degree of generality and complexity . . .



Augusta Ada Byron, Lady Lovelace.

The mode of application of the cards, as hitherto used in the art of weaving, was not found, however, to be sufficiently powerful for all the simplifications which it was desirable to attain in such varied and complicated

processes as those required in order to fulfil the purposes of an Analytical Engine. A method was devised of what was technically designated *backing* the cards in certain groups according to certain laws. The object of this extension is to secure the possibility of bringing any particular card or set of cards into use *any number of times successively* in the solution of one problem. . . .

By the introduction of the system of *backing* into the Jacquard-loom itself, patterns which should possess symmetry, and follow regular laws of any extent, might be woven by means of comparatively few cards.

Again, it [the Analytical Engine] might act upon other things besides *number*, were objects found whose mutual fundamental relations could be expressed by those of the abstract science of operations, and which should be also susceptible of adaptations to the action of the operating notation and mechanism of the engine . . . Supposing for instance, that the fundamental relations of pitched sounds in the science of harmony and of musical composition were susceptible of such expression and adaptations, the engine might compose elaborate and scientific pieces of music of any degree of complexity or extent.

IN 1966,

W

HEN I WAS EIGHT YEARS OLD, my mother gave me a little pink book entitled *A Baby Is Born*. Inside, it described in great detail, with lots of close-ups and diagrams, exactly what a sperm and egg looked like, how they joined together, and subsequent portraits of the developing fetus.

Author and editor Susie Bright is often identified as a lesbian activist, but that label misses something. She does indeed identify herself as a lesbian, but her interests and writings focus more on what people do than on what they call themselves. When she designed a survey for the lesbian magazine On Our Backs, she did not allow readers to call themselves gay, bi or straight; they could only answer questions about how they had sex, and with whom. Susie is also a sex educator, editor of two volumes of erotica, and lecturer (her traveling porn show/education evening is called "How to Read a Dirty Movie"). She's also appeared in a couple of films — she distributed condoms during the orgy scene in the Mitchell Brothers' Beyond The Green Door 2, and played herself in the cult movie The Virgin Machine. She's been politically active since her teens, working on race relations in Detroit and in the San Francisco Bay area. Her political work led her to the women's movement and the lesbian movement. She reviewed porn films for Penthouse Forum for a couple of years, one of the few women porn reviewers in the world. Her infant daughter's name is Aretha. —Richard Kadrey

How did the sperm meet the egg to begin with? The book said simply, "Mommy and Daddy love each other very much.

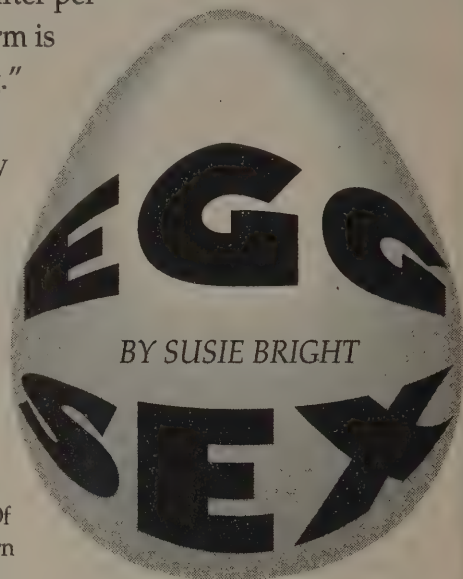
They lie close together, and after performing intercourse, the sperm is on its way to fertilize the egg."

There was no accompanying diagram, and it was probably my first earnest attempt to read between the lines of any piece of literature.

I gleaned nothing.

Twenty-four years later, I was pregnant, and this time I went out and bought my own collection of pink and blue books, bulging with instruction for prospective parents. Of course, there was a great deal to learn about fetal development and breastfeeding techniques, but I couldn't help but look in the index under "sexuality," during and after pregnancy. Each manual, from Dr. Spock to the latest yuppie know-how, had almost identical phrasing: "Mommy and Daddy love each other very much . . ." And in this vein, the following paragraphs on sexuality gave advice that was unexplicit, vague, and almost threatening in its avoidance of the nitty-gritty.

Steeped in a romance-novel notion of marriage, sexual advice to pregnant moms, be it in print or the strange silences at the doctor's office, gives short shrift to the dramatic changes in women's sexual bodies and desires. It does place a big emphasis on how to cope with the husband's ambivalent feelings toward his wife's body, and the burden pregnancy



puts on their normal sexual routine. None of these books were written in the sixties. All of them glow with a feminist and holistic approach to mothering, which includes support for working moms, refuting the sexist prejudices against breastfeeding, and all manner of enlightened positive self-esteem for the mother-to-be. I began to wonder whether maybe no one *knew* what went on in women's sexual lives during pregnancy. The most definite thing all the books said was: sometimes she's hot, sometimes she's not. This wouldn't be the first time that traditional medicine had nothing to contribute to understanding female sexuality.

Meanwhile, my clitoris started to grow. Everyone knows that a pregnant woman's breasts swell in accom-



paniment to her belly, but why had no one told me that my genitals would also grow? My vulva engorged with blood; my labia grew fatter; my clit pushed slightly out of its hood. I was reading absolutely everything on the subject of pregnant sex by this point, and by picking out the fragments of pertinent information, I knew I was not peculiar in this regard.

It's a little embarrassing to be 32 years old and finally get the message that your primary and secondary sexual characteristics are not simply for display and petting. I was being physically and psychologically dominated by the life growing inside me, and of course I had the desire to both escape and submit. I was unusually sensual and amorous, and yet 20 weeks into pregnancy, I found I could not successfully masturbate the way I had been doing since I was a kid. I was stunned, and a little panicky. My engorged clitoris was different under my fingers; too sensitive to touch my usual way, and what other way was there?

The experts say that it is a mystery why some women get more horny when they're pregnant, while others lose interest. I'll tell you something — no one loses interest. What happens is that your normal sexual patterns don't work the same way anymore. Unless you, and your lover, make the transition to new ways of getting excited and reaching orgasm, you are going to be very depressed about sex and start avoiding it altogether.

It's not just a technique change, either. Feeling desirable, and also protected, are essential to a pregnant woman's state of mind, and if it is not forthcoming from the outside, she will build a fortress that cannot be scaled.

I don't believe anymore that some women don't feel sexual during pregnancy. Some are frightened by the sexual changes their growing bodies demand. But many others confided to me, "I was so hot, and I couldn't explain it to just anyone," or "My husband and I wanted to make love

all the time, and we were afraid we would hurt the baby."

It's an awesome feat of American puritanism to insist that sex and pregnancy do not mix. It is the ultimate virgin/whore distinction. For those long nine months, please don't mention how we got this way — we're Mary now.

Your average Mary's physical transformation is quite different from an immaculate conception. A woman's vagina changes when she is pregnant, much like her vulva and clitoris. The lubrication increases, its smell and texture are different. Often accompanied by a pregnancy-type yeast infection, there is no other time in her life when a woman's genitals smell so much like a big cookie.

When I fucked, I felt like I was participating in a slow elastic taffy pull. I was more passive sexually than ever before, with no ambition to strap one on, or get on top, or do much of anything besides take it all in and float. I was one gigantic egg cozy.

Truthfully, you don't get gigantic for at least five or six months. The advice books go into great controversy over positions for intercourse but I didn't find positioning to be that big a deal. It's typical of mainstream sex books to focus on "positions" in the masculine way one might prepare a sports manual. You can enjoy sex on your back as long as your partner doesn't insist on collapsing upon you. Flat on one's belly is of course impossible after six months, but slightly turned to the side works just fine. It is often recommended for the woman to get on top, but as I said, I couldn't be bothered.

Sex is also a crucial way to prepare for childbirth. Start with this premise: "Birth is the biggest sex act you will ever take part in." If you are smart and take childbirth preparation classes, you may even get a teacher who knows something about this.

My teacher was very subtle. She gave us an almost unreadable handout in the fourth month, an instruction sheet for an exercise called "Perineal

Massage." I thought of my perineum, the little inch of skin running between my vagina and my anus. How could rubbing something the size of a birthday candle help me in labor?

The flyer (which of course opened with the obligatory "Mommy and Daddy love each other very much" spiel) said that Daddy should massage and finger the vaginal opening until he could put more and more of his fingers inside, relaxing the vaginal muscles through such caresses until he might be able to press a small orange into her opening, or even his whole hand.

His whole hand! I called up one of my friends who has breadth of experience, as a mother of two and as a (retired) porn star. "Is 'perineal massage' really fist fucking?" I asked her. "Of course," she said, laughing, "and it really helps."

I could see why immediately. A hand going inside my pussy is a little like a baby's head trying to move outside

into the world. How exciting! For the first time I felt a surge of confidence about my chances for a successful labor. If I had had practice fisting, clearly I was in great shape for the real thing.

I pestered my teacher for three weeks whether she thought using a vibrator during labor would be helpful for pain relief. She said each time that we would discuss it next week. She recommended all sorts of other distractions and exercises: going to the bathroom frequently, changing positions, getting in the bathtub, focusing on a special object, etc. Well, I decided on my own that my Hitachi magic wand was going to be my focus object. I believed that stimulating my clit would be a nice counterpoint to the contractions going on inside my belly.

I have a great photograph of me, dilated to six centimeters, with a blissful look on my face and my vibrator nestled against my pubic bone. I had no thought of climaxing, but the plea-

Susie Sexpert's Lesbian Sex World

*It was with moist anticipation that I awaited the arrival of **Lesbian Sex World** in the mail. As a fellow sex entertainer/educator, I've been a fan of author Susie Bright for several years, and was eager to review this anthology of columns from her collaboration with the magazine **On Our Backs**.*

I was not disappointed. Did Susie have her sex facts down? An M.D. couldn't have a tighter grip on practical, sweaty sex tips in the age of latex. Does Susie have the credentials to talk about the wide world of lesbian sex? She began (as I did) in the flannel-shirt era and has been in the thick of it ever since. Does she have the requisite experience to get down to the nitty gritty? How does wrist-deep sound? She has insights to share. Hell, she has insights to spare! Susie is a prescient recorder of human sexual nature, bringing rueful smiles of recognition to the reader.

Susie is what the academic-sex world needs badly: a funny, energetic cheerleader for sexual self-knowledge; a relentless promoter of the Big O; and an avowed enemy of bedroom complacency and willful ignorance. Full of fascinating facts and amusing anecdotes,

all told in Susie's patented homey style, this book is an E ticket for all those who've ever wanted to hear from the horse's mouth how lesbians really do it. No well-rounded sex library can afford to be without it.
—Nina Hartley

■ **Erotica is not meant to reassure you that you are normal, or that homosexuality is a marvelous, natural thing. Erotica is about escapism, into those secret feelings that, romantically enough, no one but you understands.**

Erotica is not about feeling smug; it is about feeling aroused. Clearly, the first test for erotic literature is: Did you come? Were you excited enough to turn your reading into a one-handed affair, or did you rush off to find your lover? Did you squeeze your thighs together and make yourself wet?

Lesbian erotica is not about beautiful people lolling about with beautiful clothes and beautiful smiles. It is about unlikely characters, unique situations and plenty of conflict leading up to the big bang. It's about personal taste, and the sensitivity to crave someone or something that maybe the whole world won't appreciate. Erotica

sure of the rhythm on my clit was like sweet icing on top of the deep, thick contractions in my womb. I would have been too tired and distracted to touch myself with my fingers by that point, and the power cord was just one of about ten that the doctors had coming from my bed. I had a complicated birth because of my baby's unusual breech position, that finally ended in an emergency caesarean. But I had a great labor.

My friend Barbara confessed to me after her first child that she had never been so turned on in her life. She called out during labor to her husband over and over again, when the baby's crown was breaking, "I want to come, touch me, please touch me" — and he thought she was hysterical.

We are utterly unaccustomed to seeing birthing as a sexual experience. A lot of us think of childbirth as something close to death; at least that's what I was afraid of. I heard women screaming in the rooms next to me

at the hospital and I knew those screams weren't exclusively from physical pain, but wild, wild fear. It's terribly frightening when you don't know what your body is doing, when your sexuality is divorced from this incredible process. Being afraid makes the pain much worse and your stamina unknowable.

There was a traffic jam of births at the city hospitals the week I had my daughter. It was about nine months after the big earthquake hit San Francisco, and apparently staying home had been a fertile pastime during that otherwise sobering period.

The other women who had children the day and night I was in the hospital did not appear to have their husbands by their side. It was easy for me to imagine what their story could be: they were single, they were lesbian, they had a husband but he didn't want to see them that way, they had a husband but he had left them earlier on in their pregnancy,

they had a husband but he was in the service and far away.

I didn't read a single parenting book that included any of these lives, although they are as commonplace as conception itself. The fractured fairy tale of "Mommy and Daddy loving each other very much" is only resonant in the sense that parents need to be loved, they need to be nurtured, because they are about to give of themselves in a way that they never dreamed possible before.

If the mother doesn't receive tenderness and passion during her pregnancy, her bitterness will stay long after childbirth — her kids will know all about it. Perhaps I could encourage childbirth professionals to advocate good sex during pregnancy as a key to psychologically healthy children.

After the birth, you will get doctor's instructions to not have sex for the next six weeks. We've all heard the moans of the woman who says, "I don't care if I don't have sex for the next six years." But if her pussy is so sore, why can't she enjoy oral sex? Her breasts are leaking colostrum, ready to start expressing milk, and they need to be sucked by someone who knows what they're doing — babies don't always get the hang of it instantly, or at mom's command.

The truth is, this six-weeks rule is arbitrary, and it's based on the fear of an infection resulting from the man ejaculating inside the vagina. There is a lot more to "sex" than this. Nothing magic happens at the end of six weeks. Not everyone's os and vaginal passageway are in the same condition after birth. Having had a caesarean, mine had not been through a full-blown vaginal birth. Without knowing exactly what risk I was taking, but knowing that the doctor didn't know what he was talking about either, I came home from the hospital and made love the sixth day after my daughter was born.

I've spoken with many women who admitted the same. "My husband and I had waited so long for this child," my nurse practitioner/midwife told

is not Wonder Bread, although it can be a Hostess Snowball.

Good erotica is not technical writing. It does not teach you how to perform cunnilingus, ass fucking, or stand-up tribadism. Erotica can be detailed, and it's often explicit, but it does not exist to tell you what the left hand is doing five inches over the right tit. In good porn you feel every move, but it's seamless; the author has greased you in, and you didn't even know what happened.

• Another myth is that fisting is an S/M activity. Please. Anything can be eroticized by an S/M approach or attitude, but simply lying back and taking it does not make one a "bottom" any more than fucking your lover makes you a "top." A fisting has more in common with petting below the waist than it does with a good whipping. If you're experiencing pain during fist fucking, *stop!* You're doing it wrong.

■ I met other men and women who pierced their genitals, and in each case, no matter what I thought of their body parts, I found the jewels made them appreciably more

beautiful. I also found it — you can dim the lights now — irresistibly romantic. No firelight or white lace hankies for me — just a labia ring and thou art mine. So much more serious than a sweater pin, a thousand times more erotic than a wedding band. It's an emblem of sexual possession and empowerment all in the same tiny circle of stainless steel.

Or, as my friend Dominga said when I pulled down my pants for show-and-tell, "How good to put something so beautiful in the most beautiful part of your body." *Exactemente.*



Susie Sexpert's Lesbian Sex World

Susie Bright, 1990; 200 pp.

\$9.95 (\$13.45 postpaid) from Open Enterprises, 1210 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110 (or Whole Earth Access)

me (she had a child after she was 40), "that we had to be intimate right away." I appreciated her using the word "intimate," because I don't think it's the case that you just have this wild hair to get it on once the baby is born. It's a closeness, a release, and a celebration that you haven't necessarily experienced during labor.

Nursing is another experience that everyone has mixed erotic feelings about. One woman will be wincing in pain from chapped and bleeding nipples, while another has orgasms from her baby's suckling. Again, if these things were brought out in the open, a lot of hurting nipples would disappear. Breastfeeding does NOT come instinctually, and it helps to have someone show you as well as tell you how to nurse comfortably, not to mention erotically.

I was mainly satisfied just to feed my baby. The erotic feelings I had about my milk were not so much feeding her, as they were feeling my breasts express themselves at other times. Sexual arousal will make your breasts leak when you're lactating, another important fact missing in most parent handbooks. As much as I have lectured on G-spot orgasms, I had never had anything come OUT of me when I was making love before. This made my head swim with the power, and at first, embarrassment.

To see my nipples not just stiffen, but release milk like a faucet every time I was turned on, took me for a very un-private loop. I loved rubbing it on my lover's chest, or my own. I felt some feminine equivalent of virility, like the biggest wet spot of them all. This was the opposite of the spectacle of me hooked up to the electric breast pump, which made me feel like a working cow. Handy, but totally unerotic.

It would be unfair to conclude the erotic discussion of pregnancy without talking about changes in sexual fantasies. Our fantasies often seem to be written in stone at an early age, and not too easily transformed in our adult years. But having a baby is the

next big hormone explosion a woman can have after puberty, and she may be surprised at what comes to mind at the moment of orgasm. I was.

One of my biggest and most irrational reservations about having a child (besides that I would die in childbirth) was that if I had a boy, I wouldn't know how to raise him. It would be a disaster, from teaching him how to use the toilet to flying a kite. Petty sexual stereotypes aside, I didn't know what little boys were like. I have no brothers, was raised by my mom, and always preferred dresses.

I'm a single parent, but I had on-again-off-again conversations with the father of my kid during my pregnancy. He was concerned that I was planning a politically correct dress code for the young one. "If it's a girl,

I suppose you'll always make her wear pants," he pouted.

"Oh no," I said, "If I have a little girl, I'm going to make sure she has the frilliest, laciest, puffiest dress you ever saw," remembering the kind of dresses I always wanted.

"And if it's a little boy," he started.

"Of course," I interrupted. "He'll have the frilliest, laciest, puffiest . . ."

My teasing was just the tip of the iceberg, though. I really didn't know what little boys were supposed to wear.

One night, I was making love with my friend J., and I imagined that he was my son. I came like a rocket, and I didn't have the nerve to tell him about it for weeks. In the meantime, I could not get this image off my mind. I recalled a really tacky porn movie

Herotica • Herotica 2

In *Herotica*, editor Susie Bright collected an assortment of women's erotic stories, designed to appeal to a variety of tastes. As Bright wrote in her introduction, "Some women want the stars, some the sleaze."

The situations range from the ordinary (a woman who meets a man in an art gallery, a weekend affair with a younger lover) to the fantastic (a science-fiction tale of a planet where women initiate sex and men eagerly serve, a ghost story in which a woman has a rendezvous with a long-dead lover). Many of the stories are playful and gently humorous, refusing to take their subject matter too seriously. One of my personal favorites, "Read Me a Story" by Kathy Dobbs, alternates between the details of a sleazy paperback that a woman is reading aloud and the details of the lovemaking between the woman and her partner. The result is teasing, comic, and ultimately satisfying.

In *Herotica 2*, Susie Bright and Joani Blank have gathered twenty-six more wonderfully libidinous tales. Like the original *Herotica*, this volume has something for every woman: gay, straight, or bisexual; kinky or cautious. For those

who like a bit of literary foreplay, Susie Bright's thoughtful introduction analyzes the characteristics of women's erotic writing: the appearance of an erotic arrogance that Bright calls "femmchismo"; the willingness to describe women's arousal "from the first flush of desire and wetness . . . to the multiple sensations after orgasm"; the defiance of traditional roles, both in lesbian relationships and in role reversals in relationships between men and women. As Bright points out, this new genre "illustrates the very real changes that have occurred in women's sexual interests and desires."

In both *Herotica* and *Herotica 2*, there is a feminine power in the honesty of the stories. The women in *Herotica* are aware of and willing to express their own sexuality. Sometimes that means taking control of a situation; sometimes, being led by a lover. But it always means accepting and enjoying the sexual impulse.

I was glad to hear that Bright and Blank are currently collecting stories for *Herotica 3*. This is one series that I hope will continue for a long, long time.
—Pat Murphy

I had seen years ago, *Taboo*, where beautiful mom Kay Parker has a son (grown-up Mike Ranger) who has eyes only for her. I wasn't aroused by the movie the first time I saw it, but now this scene could turn me on instantly. I couldn't make love to anyone, man or woman, or masturbate, without conjuring up this incestuous image.

At the same time, while making my plans for the baby and talking to friends and family, I was noticeably more at ease about having a boy child. I started noticing mothers with their sons on the street, and I didn't panic, I smiled at them. Somebody gave me a book on *How to Be a Dad*, with all sorts of fabulous hints on butch activities from skipping stones to throwing a ball. I read the whole thing and thought it was a blast. I asked all my friends how many of

them had fathers who did any of these things, and our answers shed a lot of light on our gender points of view.

When my team of doctors finally got Aretha's head out of my womb, they were exuberant. "It's a girl!" somebody said. I was shaking very badly from the anaesthesia, but this warm little yolk of feeling spilled in my head and tears of relief came to my eyes. I was so pleased to have a daughter!

When I came home and had my first chance to fantasize (something sleep deprivation cut into quite a bit), I could not for the life of me conjure up my imaginary son! He had split. My incest fantasy had expressed my fear of having a boy, and when that possibility disappeared, the fantasy lost its cathartic magic. I don't know what

would have happened to my fantasy if I had indeed come home with a son! I think I would have moved on, just as I did after Aretha, to fresh sets of anxieties which became new erotic fodder.

Now I fantasize about being pregnant again — talk about kinky. In reality I have no desire to be eating soda crackers for a month and having to go to the bathroom every ten minutes for the next half a year. But I do have glowing memories of the sexual discoveries I made during pregnancy, and I'm so grateful I had a sexually loving and inquisitive support system around me. If the whole process could be like that . . . Well, maybe I'll have another one, I tell myself, when Aretha is old enough to change the diapers. ☺

■ "Ed?" I called.

"In a minute, Jane." And then in a few more minutes, "Jane?"

"I'm on the porch."

"Close your eyes!" His voice, usually so deep and rumbly, sounded different somehow, like sexy whispers in bed, softer and more Southern. "I want you to meet Edna."

I opened my mouth to ask questions — where? who?, or to be sociable if I had to, even though I was in my bathrobe. Then, as I opened my eyes, my mouth fell wide open too. I wasn't the only one wearing one of my bathrobes. Actually, Ed had on one of my hostess gowns — a long flowing pink silk affair that tied on one shoulder and was split along the opposite side to reveal the leg. The leg it revealed, I was relieved to see, remained unshaven. So was his chest, and the thick beard I admired was still in place. (My shower drain would have been in big trouble if it were otherwise.) Such an extremely hairy man, and so much of him.

His longish hair was swept to the side and held with a barrette. His blue eyes were made bluer by the same shade of eye shadow and lash darkener. What there was to be seen of his cheeks above his beard glowed with a high pink blush. His mouth was lipsticked. A long strand of my pearls encircled his thick neck tightly like a chok-

er. The nails on his hands were bright red, and from the way that he held them away from his body, apparently still wet with polish. The pantyhose in my dresser, purchased to fit me, a much shorter person, did not reach to his waist. This was revealed by the line low down on his groin which showed through the straining seams of the pink silk. —*Herotica* (Isadora Alman)

■ Claudia had a problem. Some women might not have considered it a problem, but Claudia certainly did. You see, Claudia had a beautiful ass. A big, bouncy, beautiful ass. And everywhere she went, people wanted to fuck Claudia in her big, bouncy, beautiful ass. Truck drivers said lascivious things to her rear end as it innocently crossed the street. Gray-haired dykes had an overwhelming desire to spank her bottom. Whenever Claudia met people for the first time, that was the first thing they noticed — her plump and pretty posterior.

There were drawbacks to having such a juicy, jangly behind. Claudia hated wearing panties, but whenever she didn't wear them, she would cause a commotion. There was never a doubt in anyone's mind that she was panty-less under even the loosest of skirts. Her ass enjoyed the freedom and insisted upon jumping out in all directions. Strange men would smile, follow her and

Herotica

Susie Bright, Editor. 1988; 150 pp.
\$8.50 (\$12 postpaid)

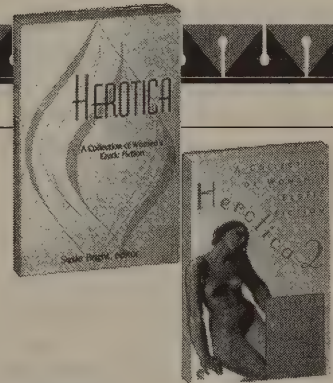
Herotica 2

Susie Bright and Joani Blank, Editors.
1992; 224 pp.

\$10 (\$13.50 postpaid)

Both from Open Enterprises, 1210 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110 (or Whole Earth Access)

tell her to have a nice day. Even the constriction of control-top pantyhose did no good in quelling the allure of her sweet cheeks. And a garter belt? It greatly enhanced Claudia's already-dangerous curves. Tight stretch pants, the current fashion rage which other women seemed to wear with no problem, resulted in minor traffic disturbances when Claudia wore them outdoors. —*Herotica 2* (Catherine Tavel)



Bombproofing Your Daughter

DEAR ABBY:

I am writing this as a follow-up to the letter I wrote you in June about my 13-year-old daughter. (I told you she was getting dangerously close to the boyfriend she had been seeing morning, noon and night.)

I took your advice and spoke to her about sex. I purchased at the local drug-store several forms of birth control (condoms, contraceptive sponge and vaginal suppositories). I also bought something called a "teen pack," which contained several trial-size items introducing young females to such things as tampons, minipads, maxi-pads, shaving lotion and razors for shaving legs. When I got home, I invited my daughter to join me at the kitchen table. My husband was working late that night, so it was a perfect opportunity for girl talk.

I lined up the contraceptive devices on the table. My daughter was a bit curious. I gave her the teen pack, telling her that all the items in that package were things that we had discussed. Then I pointed to the other items on the table and said they were items that we needed to talk about.

I carefully explained to her that now that she had become a young woman having a monthly period, she could become pregnant if she had sex. I then told her that I was in no way condoning sex in someone as young as she but that I wanted her to be informed. I then took each product and explained how it was used, and showed her the directions and how to check the expiration date on the product. After that, I opened each package and let her touch the device, examine it and ask questions.

I made sure she was aware that even if you are on the birth-control pill, that still did not stop sexually transmitted diseases such as AIDS. I told her that safe sex with condoms could not completely guarantee the prevention of pregnancy or disease but that the only way to ensure not getting pregnant or contracting a sexually transmitted disease was not to have sex.

I then took the remaining products and placed them in a box in her bathroom closet. I told her I would not check the box, but if she ever felt a need to experiment, they would be there. I stressed to her always to know that she could come to me before making any decisions that could change her life forever.

And I made some important points to her that truly hit home: I pointed out that she was too young to obtain a driver's license, too young to drink, too young to get a job and too young to be responsible for the life of another human being. I reminded her that if she were to

have a child, her education and social life would cease until such time that she could afford a baby sitter to resume her studies and social activities.

I realize this letter is long, but I wanted you to know how I dealt with this issue. My daughter, after our talk, has been a different person!

I trust my daughter, and your advice was a big help in dealing with a very difficult situation. I realize that I have a long way to go in completing the journey through her teenage years, but I believe that we, as a family, will survive.

—North Dakota Mom

DEAR MOM: Every daughter should have a mother like you. ♡

Dear Abby makes her first appearance in Whole Earth Review.

My daughter is seven, and she already knows about where babies come from — and how AIDS is transmitted, what condoms are for, and why young girls should not get pregnant. If you have ever wondered how to talk to your daughter about sex, this is the best example I've seen. —Howard Rheingold

Taken from the DEAR ABBY column by Abigail Van Buren.

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Sexual Selection and Animal Genitalia

This book explains why male genitalia are the most rapidly evolving feature of most animals. That is to say, there is more diversity in penes than in the rest of the body among animals. Plates show the diversity of male genitalia, from insects to mammals; the forms are more extravagant than one can imagine. Among mammals, there are curlies, and mushrooms, and ice-hooks, and things that roll up like party favors, and hammers and maces and cats-o'-nine-tails. Female genitalia are (relatively) uniform and bland.

This is all the result of female choice: it's all to impress the female, and unlike long feathers and other jewelry, impractical doo-dads on your dick don't get in the way of everyday survival.

This evolutionary system requires the female to notice. And she generally doesn't notice until copulation, which would seem too late. But overall in the animal kingdom, copulation does not mean fertilization, and fertilization does not mean implantation; usually where the male copulates is not where the egg is fertilized, nor where it is implanted (true of humans, too). To coordinate

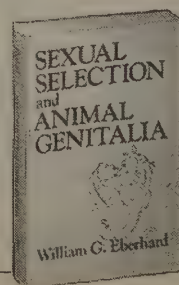
these processes is apparently something that the female has some control over. In an evolutionary sense, she decides whether, based on her mate's sexual performance and courtship talent, she wants to bear his offspring.

The result of this post-coitus intercourse are some pretty weird peckers and some very kinky sexual antics; whereas in monogamous species one would expect to see uniformly drab cocks. That's certainly true in termites... —Kevin Kelly

Sexual Selection and Animal Genitalia

William G. Eberhard, 1985; 256 pp.

\$15.95 (\$17.95 postpaid) from Harvard University Press/Customer Service, 79 Garden Street, Cambridge, MA 02138; 617/495-2600



Lesbian Lists

In the introduction to *Lesbian Lists*, Dell Richards explains that she defines "lesbian" broadly, including "women-identified women, whether they call themselves lesbians or not, whether they had sex or not. . . . To dismiss romantic friends, spinsters, and sworn virgins, the women who have done everything in their power to escape heterosexual dominance, does them — and us — a grave disservice." As a result, this book is a valuable resource for anyone interested in women and their activities.

I found *Lesbian Lists* amusing, informative, and inspiring. Lists like "19 Lesbian Novelists" and "9 Nonfiction Books Every Lesbian Should Own" provided me with suggested reading for years to come. Other lists introduce startling historic and contemporary figures — like Doa Catalina de Erauzo, a cross-dressing sixteenth-century woman who was called the "Robin Hood" of Latin America (she robbed from the rich and gave to the poor). And Billy Tipton, who passed as a man until her death in 1989. The masquerade made it possible for Tipton to play piano and sax in the big-band era, when women were only allowed to sing.

And E. M. "Monte" Punshon, who, at the age of 105, was chosen to be the spokesperson for Australia's 1988 World Expo because she was thought to be the only Australian alive who had attended the 1888 Exposition. When interviewed, Punshon revealed that she was a lesbian — and had been one since age six.

I expect that *Lesbian Lists* will prove to be a useful sourcebook for many occasions. Personally, I plan to consult "11 Amazon Queens" and "4 Chinese Amazon Warriors" next time I need to convince someone that women are not always nurturing and supportive. (Consider, for example, Hong Xuanjiao, who led an all-woman combat division during the Taiping Revolution of 1851-64. The Revolutionary forces included forty women's armies, totaling some 100,000 women warriors.) —Pat Murphy

6 Lesbian Sex Theorists, Sex Radicals, and Erotic Writers

1. TEE CORINNE

Also known as a photographer, Corinne has published a wide variety of erotic books such as *Labiaflowers*, *Yantras*, and *Dreams of the Woman Who Loved Sex*.



Lesbian Lists

Dell Richards, 1990; 254 pp.

\$8.95 (\$9.95 postpaid) from Alyson Publications, 40 Plympton Street, Boston, MA 02118; 617/542-5679 (or Whole Earth Access)

2. JO ANNE LOULAN

Loulan is a sex therapist and lecturer who has published *Lesbian Passions: Loving Ourselves and Each Other* as well as *Lesbian Sex*.

3. SUSIE BRIGHT

Bright founded the erotic lesbian magazine *On Our Backs* in the early 1980s and edited a collection of woman-oriented studies, *Herotica*. She is also known as "Susie Sexpert" for her column on sex toys.

4. PAT CALIFIA

Despite continual run-ins with censors, Califia keeps writing. Her books on sex include *Sapphistry: The Book of Lesbian Sexuality* and *Macho Sluts*. She also writes an advice column for the national gay magazine, *The Advocate*.

5. BERTHA HARRIS

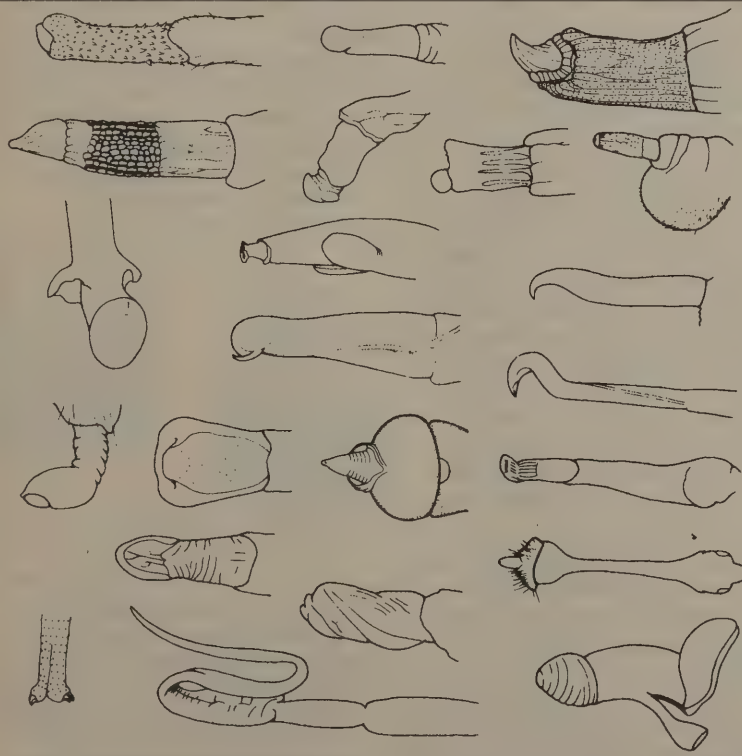
With Emily L. Sisley, novelist Harris also wrote one of the earliest lesbian sex manuals, *The Joy of Lesbian Sex*.

6. MARIANA VALVERDE

The author of *Sex, Power and Pleasure*, Valverde is a theorist who addresses issues such as pornography and sadomasochism, which have split apart the lesbian-feminist community.

12 International Words for Lesbian

1. DONNA CON DONNA, woman with woman, Italian
2. MÄDCHEN SCHMECKER, girl-taster, German
3. MAL-FLOR, tomboy (with negative connotations), Spanish
4. MANFLORA, tomboy, Spanish
5. MARIMACHO, masculine Mary, Spanish
6. PANTALONUDA, tomboy, or wears pants, Spanish
7. POLONE-HOMI, young man, British from Spanish
8. SAWA LINAA, to live as partners, Klamath tribe
9. SHUANG CHIEH, sworn sisters, Chinese
10. SHU NII, self-combers, Chinese
11. TORTILLERA, tortilla maker, Mexican
12. VRILLE, a gimlet, French



A sampler of mammalian penes (all flaccid, drawn to different scales) from groups in which penis morphology is generally poorly known and has not been used to make taxonomic distinctions. Those in the top two rows are all primates.

ALASKA,

HO!



Pavlov Volcano (shown erupting in 1987) is one of the most active volcanoes in the Ring of Fire. Smaller Pavlov's Sister rises in the foreground. —Alaska's Volcanoes

NINETEEN NINETY-TWO is the 50th anniversary of the Alcan Highway, fabled as the last Great Drive available on an increasingly gentrified continent; feared as a vacation-spoiling vehicle disintegrator. I VW-bugged it in 1957. Conditions were not as tough as they were during WW2, but we had days when twelve hours at the wheel moved us less than 100 miles. The longsuffering bug was never quite the same afterwards. I wasn't either; it was two and a half years before I returned to the "lower 48."

Last summer, Liz and I drove our 1973 Chinook minicamper some 8,000 miles in that part of the world. We are happy to report that the Alcan and other major roads in Canada and Alaska are paved, but don't expect to waft along as if you were on Interstate 80. The pavement — we are being charitable here — is subject to huge frost heaves, endless repairs, and challenging anomalies such as astounding potholes that can remove an entire wheel and suspension from an inattentively guided vehicle — we saw the messy results quietly biodegrading behind many a Gas-Rooms-Bar-Camping-Showers-Store-Repairs-Bait Shop (Pop. 8) onebuildingtown. Much of the road caps a narrow, raised berm that avoids unsettling the permafrost and muskeg beneath. Those stretches may unsettle you, too, for in many places there are no shoulders. If something goes wrong, you stop right in the middle of the road and hope for the best. Drop a wheel off the edge, and it's roof-sledging time. Abnormal driver skill isn't required, but discipline is. And you'd better like driving a lot.

Gravel roads are often less treacherous, though they occasionally subject you to egregious dust (like the mosquitos, it's worse than any possible exaggeration), slippery mud, washboard, or a surface carved from shale on edge like thou-

sands of axe-blades. Your vehicle should be in good shape and equipped with sturdy tires. Refuel as the gauge approaches half; the next station may be gone. Gasoline can be expensive and of poor quality. Plan for a leisurely pace. Except on the best pavement — mostly near cities and in lower B.C. — we usually averaged 35-40 mph and sometimes much less.

Is all that work worth it? Will you see what you came to see? Ooooooh, it's there all right! With a bit of hubris, and some cooperation from the ever-changing weather, what you'll experience is right out of those coffee-table books, National Geographic Specials and your fondest dreams. Get out of the car and hike, bike, fly or float, and it's even better. It's so spectacular that even the rural poverty and (mostly subtle) environmental degradation seem almost invisible.

Driving gave us the flexibility to choose our own pace, dodge nasty weather, and change plans as unanticipated opportunities arose. We barely sampled the possibilities, and we plan to go again. But not this summer, when the expected 90,000 Alcan-anniversary tourists will surely overrun the place. Like the voracious insects, they'll be gone by late August through September, which is the best time to go. Dust is laid. Ice is yet to come. Camps are empty. Brisk weather. Fall colors. Clean air. Fresh fish. Wildlife. Yum!

We found several guidebooks to be useful. Our favorite is *Alaska*, from Lonely Planet, whose writers always manage to furnish finely detailed, reasonably up-to-date information. This one has lots of stuff about canoeing and hiking (including hitch-), and is aimed more at outdoor types than the Holiday Inn crowd. But it's only for Alaska; you'll need a guide to Canada as well. The *Adventure*

Guide to the Alaska Highway is a good one for roadies, though not so useful for explorers. We found that it closely matched what was actually there. We also consulted other, more specialized books as well as tourist-bureau brochures (Canadians do those best). When sources disagreed, we'd add 'em up and act on the average. That worked fine, especially when mixed with a bit of local gossip. If motivation is what you need to get you on the road, we recommend the gorgeous offerings of The Alaska Geographic Society. And remember, your local library is doubtless well stocked with tempting Alaska fare. The pre-trip homework should have you rarin' to go.

So be nice to your bad self and make the time to go. Grab at least four weeks if you can, figuring to head for home when half your time or money is gone. Take things as they come — no goals. You deserve to be rewarded for all the good-cause work you've been doing, right? It really is inspiring. The trip will bring new meaning to the word environment. See you on the road. —J. Baldwin and Liz Fial

Alaska (A Travel Survival Kit)

Jim DuFresne, 1991; 347 pp.

\$12.95 (\$14.45 postpaid) from Lonely Planet Publications, Embarcadero West, 155 Filbert Street, Suite 251, Oakland, CA 94607-2538; 800/275-8555 (or Whole Earth Access)

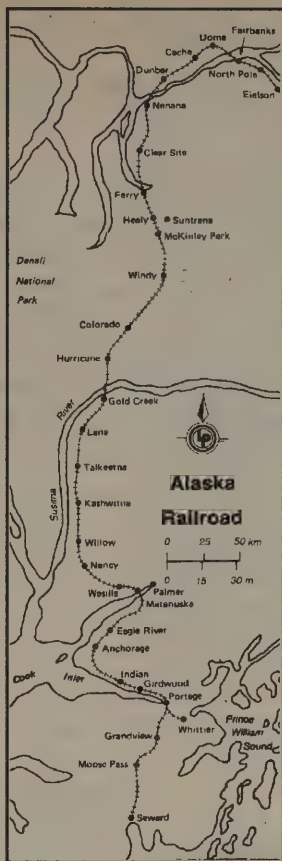


• The pilot is the best judge of weather patterns and can see, or sometimes feel, bad flying conditions when others can't. Always schedule extra days around a charter flight. It's not uncommon to be 'socked in' by weather for a day or two until a plane can fly in. Don't panic, they know you are there. Think of the high school basketball team in the mid-1960s which

flew to King Cove in the Aleutians for a weekend game. They were 'socked in' for a month before they could fly out again.

When travelling to small Bush towns, a scheduled flight or mail run is the cheapest way to go. Don't hesitate, however, to charter a flight to some desolate wilderness spot on your own; the best that Alaska has to offer is usually just a short flight away.

The Alaska Railroad provides a good and inexpensive means of transport for travellers, and the scenery on each route is spectacular. Hitching along the George Parks Highway is cheaper, sure, but few travellers, even those counting their dimes, regret booking a seat on the line and viewing one of the world's most pristine wilderness areas from the train's comfortable and, if you're willing to pay a little extra, gracious carriages.



Adventure Guide to the Alaska Highway

Ed and Lynn Readicker-Henderson, 1992; 207 pp.

\$15.95 (\$18.45 postpaid) from Hunter Publishing, Inc., 300 Raritan Parkway, Edison, NJ 08818; 201/225-1900 (or Whole Earth Access)



You can tell which species it is by the hump at the back of the neck: black bears don't have one, grizzlies do.

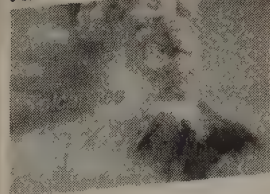
There are several sub-species of grizzly bear in the north from the huge Kodiak bears, to the black bear-size Toklat grizzlies of Denali Park. Their fur color ranges from black to blonde, with cinnamon colors perhaps being the most common. On all fours, they are only slightly taller than a black bear, but when reared up, they can be 12 feet tall. Their paws can be the size of din-

ner plates. Most grizzlies weigh 450-1000 pounds. Males are larger than females.

Liard Hot Springs Provincial Park

Located at mile 497, this is a great place to soak out some of the sore driving muscles. There are two pools for bathing. The first, Alpha, is about 1/4 mile from the parking lot. A raised wooden walkway has been built to facilitate access. The second pool, Beta, is about the same distance from Alpha. There's no walkway here, but there is a well-maintained path. Both pools offer changing rooms, bathing platforms, and water at about 118°F. Park rules require that all bathers wear something, but they don't say what. If you didn't pack a bathing suit, just jump in in your clothes.

ALASKA GEOGRAPHIC



Alaska Geographic Society

(Membership includes 4 issues of *Alaska Geographic*)

\$39/year (\$49 outside US)

Alaska's Volcanoes

(*Alaska Geographic* Volume 18, No. 12)

\$17.95 (\$20.95 postpaid)

Alaska Geographic Society, P. O. Box 93370, Anchorage, AK 99509

In late 1989 and through August 1990, Redoubt, Augustine's neighbor to the north, erupted for the first time since 1966. This event touched off the second most costly volcanic eruption in the nation's history, exceeded only by the 1980 Mount St. Helens explosion. The Kenai Peninsula, Anchorage bowl and much of the Matanuska-Susitna region received ash. Transportation was disrupted and an oil-loading terminal temporarily shut down.

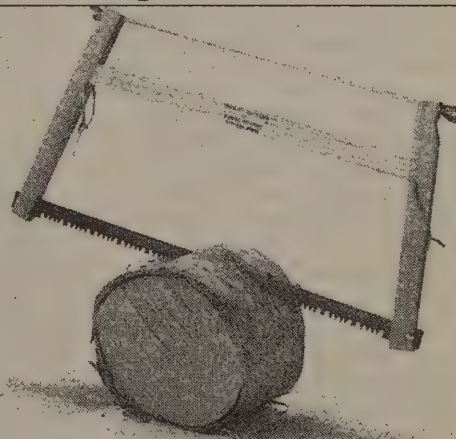
As of spring 1991, Redoubt had been declared dormant and the rest of Alaska's volcanoes had settled down to their usual steaming, just waiting for the moment when the Ring of Fire next flashes its fury.

The Boundary Waters Catalog

The Boundary Waters Canoe Area is what they call that zillion-lakes park in Minnesota (Quetico is the Canadian part); two million acres just for canoeing! Folks around there know about canoes because they have to. (I've visited homes where you had to canoe to the mailbox!) Here's a tasty catalog of appropriate voyageur hardware, clothing, anti-insect weaponry, maps, guides, rental information and things to read before you arrive or while you're rained in. —J. Baldwin

The Boundary Waters Catalog

Free from Northwoods Company, 105 North Central Avenue, Ely, MN 55731; 800/223-6565



The Curtis-Stebbins Saw

A saw so good, we don't bother to offer you any other!

By far the most compact, best cutting, most economical and neatest looking camp saw we've ever seen. Do we sound impressed? Well, everyone who has seen or tried one is equally impressed. This saw is so far above the competition in so many ways we're surprised that every outdoor store in America doesn't carry it. But don't tell them. You're only going to find it at Northwoods Company. Oh, watch out for similar looking saws that are copies of the Curtis-Stebbins. They may be almost as good but you'll pay at least \$10 more.

Curtis-Stebbins is hand-made in Maine of red oak and Swedish steel. For packing, it folds up with the blade protected by the handle.

E3000 \$25.00

Extra Blade E3010 \$6.00

JUST SAY YES (Sex Zines And The New World Order)

BY RICHARD KADREY

A WEIRD SUBTERRANEAN DYNAMIC always seems to kick in amid clamped-down cultures. In the shadow of Reaganism's stern and myopic morality, and the AIDS-is-sex-is-death media bombardment, a new underground has emerged with a message that is, at root, simple: Sex is alive and well in America.

This underground counterpart to the new world order cuts across all the old sexual lines — politics and erotica in this world are often less cut-and-dried in their orientation than in the past (and thus more radical). In the most interesting work, it's easy to begin reading a story with no clue as to its sexual bent. This is a conscious choice in many cases. Several zines have appeared with a decidedly omnisexual slant, encompassing more than just sexual contact between sexes: a point of view that transcends the crumbling barricades of gay and straight.

As in many personal revolutions, women are the avant-garde of the movement. Writers and editors such as Susie Bright, Lily Braindrop, Rachel Kaplan, and Carol Queen are responsible for some of the most exciting work in the following survey.

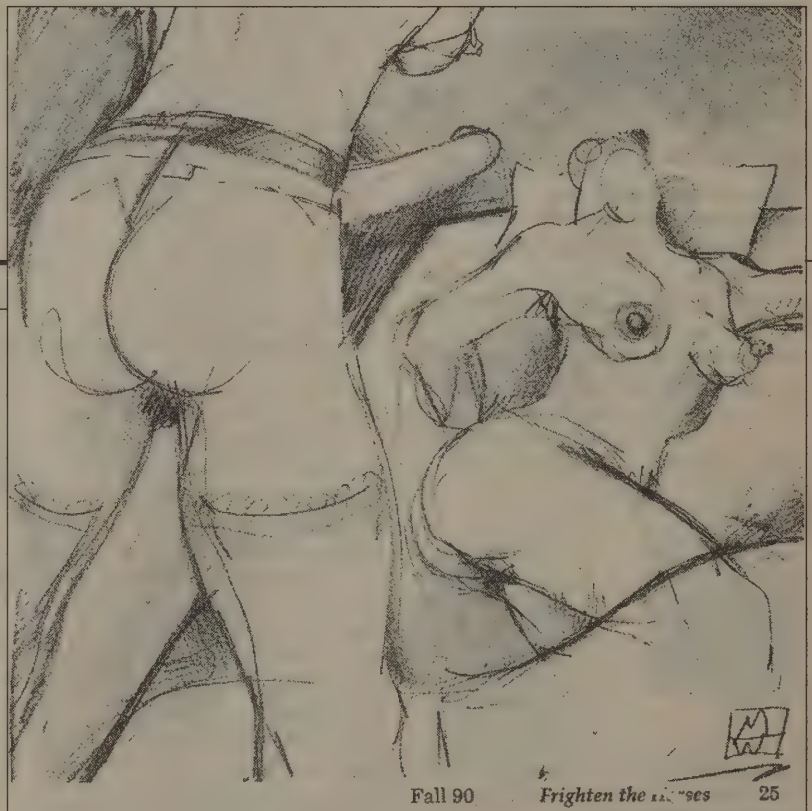
No matter what your orientation or sexual tastes, there's probably something for you here. If something strikes you as odd or frightening about one of these zines, that's probably as good a reason as any to try an issue. After all, the real danger in reading zines like these isn't in being corrupted, it's in finding out who you are.

Frighten the Horses

Mark Pritchard, editor. \$16/year [4 issues; \$5 sample issue] from Heat Seeking Publishing, 41 Sutter Street #1108, San Francisco, CA 94104.

Mark Pritchard's excellent quarterly is subtitled "a document of the sexual revolution"; it easily lives up to that claim, combining equal doses of intelligence and heat. *FTH* features well-written fiction and nonfiction (often addressing issues of censorship and activism) for men and women of all sexual preferences, by the likes of Rachel Kaplan, Carol Queen, Pat Califia, Andy Dunn, and Pritchard himself. This is also one of the few magazines that publishes erotic poetry that isn't so sweet and pure and politically correct that you want to puke.

The curious thing here is that coming out last year as bisexual didn't do nearly as much for me as coming out this year as "queer." What was true for me, and I think it's true for a lot of bisexuals, is that even though we accept the fact we have sex with both genders, we feel ambivalent about the



Fall 90

Frighten the Horses

25

"bisexual" label. There's something clinical about it, something pedantic. Once I had come out as bisexual, I knew more about who I was, but I didn't really know how to have fun with it. . . .

For me, being queer is to "bisexual" as "gay" is to "homosexual." It has power because I'm demystifying and reclaiming a

word that's been used against me. It unites me with gays and lesbians, to whom I've always felt kinship (more than to straights), and it includes people of every sexual underclass — homos, bi's, transvestites, transgenders, and that huge area called Other — so that I feel like I belong to a huge, varied group.

On Our Backs

Debi Sundahl, editor. **\$34.95/year (6 issues)** from 526 Castro Street, San Francisco, CA 94114.

Subtitled "Entertainment for the Adventurous Lesbian," it's a direct reply to many dour, antisex "womyn's" magazines. The editors are relentless in their pursuit of the politically incorrect; recently departed editor Susie Bright even used one of her columns to recount having and enjoying sex with a man in order to get pregnant. **OOB** features excellent nonfiction and art guaranteed to delight! piss off just about everyone.

Under what circumstances women feel safe might affect the future of [lesbian sex clubs] more than any decisions made by the mayor's office. A distaste for anonymous sex could be what separates the women from the boys — one of those gender differences for which gays, that pure distillation of woman-woman and man-man, provide an ideal litmus test. Men have found anonymous sex a turn-on for centuries; in fact, for some, it's the only way to fly. Women, even those titillated by the existence of sex clubs and public sex, shake their heads at the anonymous aspect.

Researchers have found that women prefer reading sexual stories, while men like hot photographs. Women, they theorize, iden-



tify with the characters they're reading about, thus putting themselves into the story, while men are excited by strangers in photos. Because of our conditioning, we're more likely than men to feel defensive and anxious in the presence of strangers. Before we can get turned on, we seem to need assurances that a situation is safe, and to know enough about our partner to convince us that she's trustworthy.

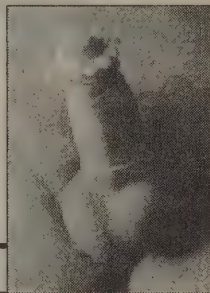
Libido

Marianna Beck & Jack Hafferkamp, editors. **\$26/year (4 issues)** from P. O. Box 146721, Chicago, IL 60614.

When it comes to stimulating both your intellect and your crotch, few publications can come close to **Libido**. This quarterly of prose and graphics is intelligent without being highbrow, sexy without being coy. The layout and graphics are impeccably rendered, and the fiction much hotter than you would guess in a magazine this classy.

A recent experiment at UCLA makes it clear that the dangers of ozone may indeed strike closer to the bone than most realize. Researcher Richard Baker of UCLA unrolled 20 condoms and placed them over test tubes before exposing them to 300 parts per billion of ozone — a level not unusual for southern California. The result? After 72 hours, only two of the 20 condoms appeared intact. Eighteen had obvious perforations and the tops dropped off five of them when touched.

Alisha gave him the toy she found in the park that afternoon and now he says he's all dressed up with no place to go.



The Sandmutopia Guardian

Carol Truscott, editor. **\$24 (6 issues)** from Desmodus, Inc., P. O. Box 410390, San Francisco, CA 94141; 415/252-1195.

The *Whole Earth Review* of outré sexuality magazines, this hardcore S&M magazine has all the usual stuff you find in hardcore — plus, as a bonus, you get carpentry lessons with diagrams for building projects like they have in the back of *Popular Mechanics*. Only here, you're building restraints and torture implements.

The most surprising thing about the

magazine is not the content, but the intimate, straightforward tone in which it's written. Imagine your grandmother sitting you down with a plate of warm cookies and explaining how to give a really good enema.

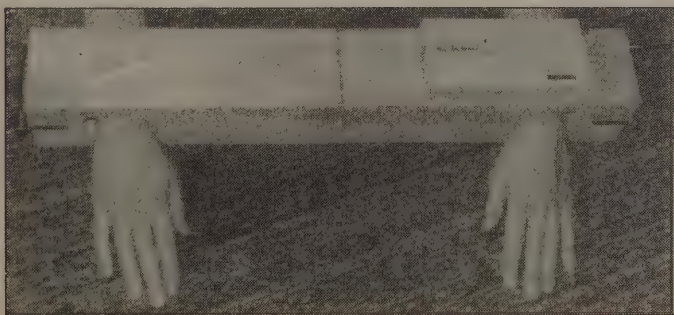
Electric "stocks"

I used a sprinkler timer to open the lock mechanism automatically. It is a fail-safe system in that if electric power is lost to the unit, it unlocks automatically. The power transformer can also be plugged into a mechanical timer that will disconnect

the power after your chosen number of hours. The timer I use has four "zones." The first "zone" is used for starting, or getting in, time, which I usually set at one minute. The next three zones are all tied together electrically, and each zone can be set for 0 to 99 minutes. This gives as much as five hours using the three zones. There is also a 6-zone version of this timer.

I built the stocks of maple. The length down the wrist is four inches. The wood is two inches thick. I used a table saw and a rasp to cut out the indentations that the hands go through. This took quite a few passes with the table saw. I used hinges with set screws to prevent the removal of the hinge pin.

The lock mechanism is in an indentation that I routed out of the center of the lower piece of wood. I put a metal "U" channel in the wood and mounted the lock solenoid to it. Inside the channel I welded a small bracket to hold the solenoid. The solenoid I used also required a dropping resistor and a bridge rectifier. I placed these in the "U" channel as well.



Taste of Latex

Lily Braindrop, editor. \$20/year (4 issues) from P. O. Box 460122, San Francisco, CA 94146-0122.

TOL is the mutant offspring of Bay Area editor/smut maven Lily Braindrop. Sprung from the same restless post-punk energy that inspired a thousand lesser zines, TOL is dedicated to gender-bending, -slicing and -dicing, and just plain gender-fucking. The graphics range from Michael Rosen's stunning "Sexual Portrait" photography to politically incorrect drawings to reader-provided shots of stunning drag queens. Issue #5 features Danielle Willis's tale of boredom and banality on the set of an amateur porn movie, an interview with pioneering gay playwright Robert Chesley, a handy how-to guide to vaginal fisting, and hot fiction from Maria Jimenez.

Taste of Latex is erotica with a rock-and-roll attitude.



—Young Lust



"Straight boys don't know how to give me what I want."

The "counter-feminist" assumption about femmes is often a reaction to what some perceive as symbols of women's oppression: the high heels, the makeup, the restrictive clothing. In this case, it's important to remember that one person's symbol of

oppression is another's celebration of self-determination (Can you say pink triangle?). There are plenty of people determined to put the femme back in feminism. It's an honorable endeavor, so even if it's not the identity for you, clam up and let it happen.

Then there are those who are truly sexist, and all the reasoned argument in the world won't sway them from their belief that femininity is a truly inferior thing. For those people, I have two words of advice: Fuck Off.

Having ground my hot-pink handled axe to a fine edge, I'm off to do something more productive than splitting hairs. Remember: conscious choice, not cultural blackmail. That's this femme's thing, now do you understand?

One thing to consider about the hanky code is that it's only situationally effective. The red hanky that means 'fister' in an urban cruising bar may mean 'This is what I use to wipe the sweat off my forehead' in a rural farm town (or, perhaps, vice-versa).

Real Girl • Young Lust

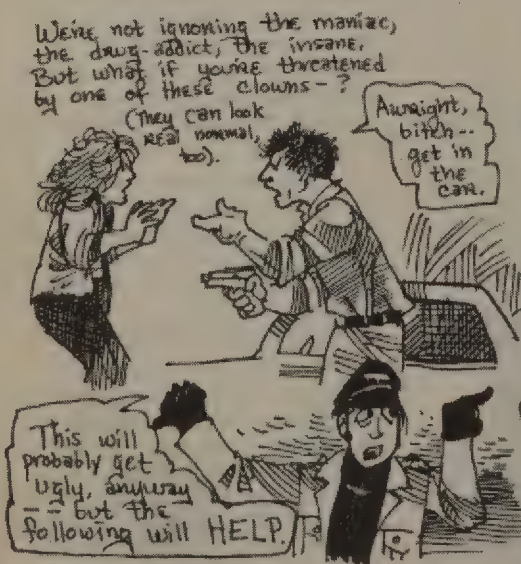
Real Girl: \$3/issue from Fantagraphics Books, 7563 Lake City Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115.

Young Lust: \$5/issue (include statement that you are over 18) from Last Gasp, P. O. Box 410067, San Francisco, CA 94141.

Two comics, lots of trouble.

Edited by Frighten The Horses contributor Angela Bocage, Real Girl plays with,

explores, and beats up on gender and stereotyped sex roles. The comics range from hilarious to pissed-off, and often hit both extremes (as in Donna Barr's "Opportunities"). Other contributors include Mario Hernandez, Diane Nomin, Trina Robbins and Ms. Bocage herself. But the best reason to read RG is spelled out by the description on the cover: "The comic about SEX for all genders and orientation... by cartoonists who are good in bed!"



—Real Girl

1. If you obey, it is almost 100% sure you'll be killed.
2. If you refuse to obey or cooperate -- there's a 50% chance you could be killed, raped or mutilated -- but 50% is better than 100%.
3. If you act like a victim, you'll BE a victim. Keep your head up, your shoulders back, walk with confidence and energy.
4. Remember -- a woman spends her life in a combat zone. Not every male is your enemy -- but your most likely enemy will be male. WATCH 'EM!

Young Lust is a continuing parody of those fifties and sixties romance comics where young women were tempted by lust but always ended up with the right guy, and nobody ever got laid. In his grand scheme to subvert mainstream romantic schlock, Jay Kinney has brought together some fine artists and writers, including Bill Griffith, Paul Mavrides, Diane Nomin, and Art Spiegelman. Issue #7 is co-edited with San Francisco sex diva Susie Bright.

Anything That Moves

Karla Rossi, editor. \$25/year (4 issues; make checks payable to BABN) from BABN, 2404 California Street #24, San Francisco, CA 94115.

Easily one of the two best names for a magazine dealing with sex/sexuality ever. *ATM*, published by the Bay Area Bisexual Network in San Francisco, is a news, networking, and support zine for bis of both sexes. Their second issue contains articles on the problems of building a bisexual community, an interview with performance artist Keith Hennessy, letters, information on services and groups for bis, reviews of books and zines, fiction, and a calendar of events. An excellent magazine not just for bis, but for anyone concerned with sexual rights.

• **ATM:** What culture or cultures are you thinking of?

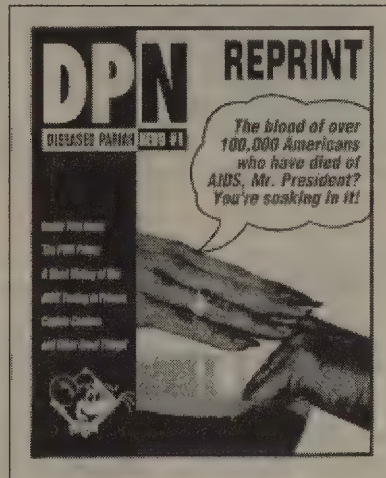
KB [Kate Bornstein]: A . . . tribe like in the film, *The Gods Must Be Crazy*. They assign

gender at birth according to tribal needs twelve years from the child's birth. They look around, and because there are so few people and so few resources, everything has to be economically planned, and the gender roles are the most rigid of almost any culture. Once you're a man, that's it, you do man things. If you're a woman, you do woman things. But they look around, and they [say], "in twelve years that hunter's going to be dead, this child is a boy." It has nothing to do with genitals. Nothing. So you've got all these — to our western eyes — female fathers and male

daughters running around which is kind of interesting, but to them it's just men and women, and genitals are totally secondary to any other consideration.

There's a culture in the south Pacific that has six genders. And those genders are based on sexual orientation as well as [on] identity and roles and there are different permutations of those. In Bali, hermaphrodites are acknowledged as a third gender [whereas] in our western culture, our doctors have taken it upon themselves to "cure" hermaphrodites at birth with surgery.

Diseased Pariah News



Beowulf Thorne, editor. \$7/year (4 issues; \$10/Canada; \$18/international) from DPN, P. O. Box 31431, San Francisco, CA 94131; 510/891-0455.

"*Diseased Pariah News* is a quarterly publication of, by, and for people with HIV disease. We are a forum for infected people to share their thoughts, feelings, art, writing, and brownie recipes in an atmosphere free of teddy bears, magic rocks and seronegative guilt." It's also one of the most beautifully produced zines around. *DPN* dishes up copious amounts of black humor, safe-sex info, and very personal features on "How I Got AIDS" and being busted at ACT-UP rallies. Whether you're gay, straight or bi, this is a zine you shouldn't miss.

• Now, let's get real here, folks. Dental dams were originally designed for oral surgery, not oral sex. The latex is thick and clunky, and our fearless bubble-butt surfboy slaves have complained of rubber

burn and tongue fatigue. Never fear, gentle readers, help is at hand. Simply take a rubber, preferably thin and lube-free (try Gold Coin, Saxon Ultra Thin, Crown, or Beyond) and snip off the tip with a pair of scissors. Then cut through one side of the rolled condom and unroll. Voila, a sheet of latex much thinner than any industrial dam!

Still tastes like thousand year old balloons? Try smearing a little Astroglide on it. The high glycerin content will cancel out that fatal flavor.

• Can one be spiritual at the memorial service of an atheist and not appear hypocritical? We at *DPN* answer a yearty YES. Take all of the teddy bears that your loved one ever received and burn them! Let the smoke from those good wishes float heavenward, or at least into the next-door neighbor's window. Louise Hay literature makes the best kindling, but in the absence of that, charcoal lighter fluid works in a jiffy. (Beware: burning teddies can give off noxious fumes.)

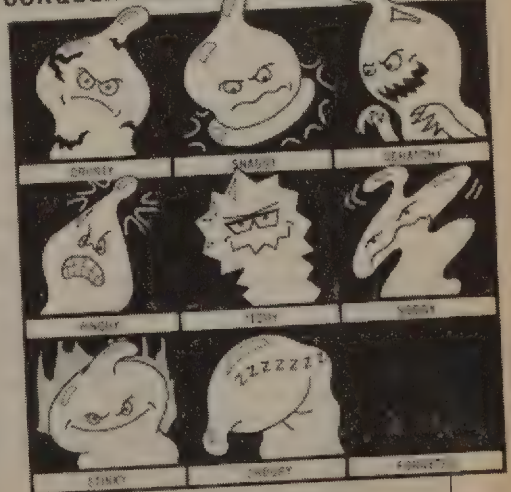
Black Lace

Alycee J. Lane, editor. \$20/year (4 issues) from BLK Publishing Co., P. O. Box 83912, Los Angeles, CA 90083; 213/410-0808; fax 213/410-9250.

This relatively new zine by and for African-American lesbians has a simple and clean layout, hot fiction, and attractive graphics, along with humor pieces, poetry and "Bad-Ass Black Women On File" — a section focusing on gay and straight African-American women "who are making a positive difference in our communities." One of *BL*'s standout features is a "we-can-do-that-too" Penthouse-style letters column that's equal parts hilarious and erotic.

• Of course shopping for dildos with the "race question" in mind is quite a learning experience. Immediately one particular dildo caught my attention: "flesh colored." I looked it over, pressed it against my arm. It wasn't my flesh color; in fact, it looked more like the color of the white woman who was standing next to me. What does it mean, exactly, when white hegemony extends to the production of dildos? The dildo was at once humanized, racialized. It seemed to come to life in my hands. Pulsating. Dangerous. I dropped it quickly and, when it fell, I noticed that it was just like the others. They were all one size, rigidly cut to the six-inch mark. Their thickness was average (I guess). And none had the classic beer can circumference.

CONQUER THE NINE RUBBER GREMLINS!



Whorezine

Victor St. Blaise, editor. Subscription is by donation (\$20 or more is requested; send money orders with blank "Pay To" field). 2300 Market Street/Suite 19, San Francisco, CA 94114.

Picture a punk zine growing up and trying to pass in polite society. That sums up the close-to-chaos look and feel of *Whorezine*, a Bay Area zine written by and for sex-industry workers. Not surprisingly, a lot of articles have to do with health and disease prevention, and the current status (or lack thereof) of sex workers in America. There's also a lot of humor in *Whorezine*, including accounts of prostitutes' weirdest tricks, cartoons, and "Playtime for Prostitutes," a sort-of graffiti and insult page — imagine the scrawlings on the wall of a particularly demented and politically aware high school. Not for the humor-impaired.

From the list of men's reasons for not using condoms, the researchers and whores came up with five profiles of clients: the Executive, the Smooth Talker, the Macho, the Stubborn One, and the Indomitable. These characters each became their own chapter in the comic book in which Maritza, a savvy sex worker, triumphs. Through verbal logic and coquetry, she counters the men's refusal to use condoms and convinces four out of five to use them.

The Executive, for example, is used to getting his own way and has no problem offering more money if Maritza will just let him not put on a condom. She sweet talks him and lets him know that she is willing to take less money and put the condom on him herself. Because the prostitutes had such an important role in coming up with the material for the book, as well as editing power after the first book was completed, the chapter with Willie, the Macho is especially good.

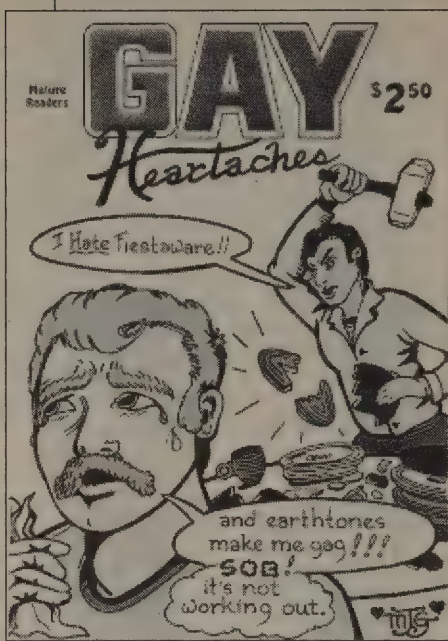
Using real and local imagery and language, Maritza uses cock fighting, a local sport, in this scenario:

Willie — "No, I don't use them (condoms). What do you think I am, a fighting cock that has to have its spur booted?"

Maritza — "Try it just this once. You know fighting cocks don't cut themselves when their spurs are booted" (Maritza kisses him and puts on the condom.)

What gives this an extra punch is the fact that fighting cocks are "booted" during practice to protect themselves from getting cut. "Cut" has a double meaning since the term is locally used to refer to getting a sexually transmitted disease.

Gay Comix

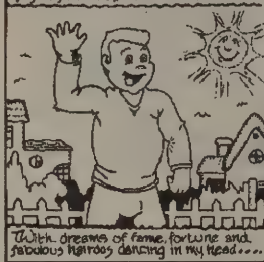


Robert Triptow, Editor. \$3/copy (\$12/year) from Bob Ross, 395 9th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

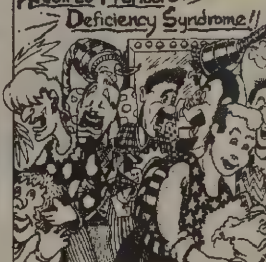
Hilarious satire and commentary on gay life in the nineties — from gay parenting to the bar scene to the use and abuse of pronouns ("It all started with a simple 'Oh, her' or a 'she' where 'he' should be"). Everyone is skewered, no one is spared, and feel-good/PC comics are kept to a bare minimum.



It all started innocently enough. I was just a simple, gender-correct young gay boy from a small town...



Oh! only if I knew everyone there had...



It started with a simple 'Oh, her' or a 'she' where 'him' or 'he' should be...



Spectator

Dave Patrick & Layne Winklebleck, editors. \$15/6 months (\$29/year) from P. O. Box 1984, Berkeley, CA 94701.

See this weekly tabloid on the newsstand and you would probably pass it right by. In fact, at least half of *Spectator* is a dead loss; consisting of phone-sex and escort ads, and pictorials that only horny 14-year-old boys could love (trust me, I remember). The good half of *Spectator*, however, is very good indeed. Recent issues have featured intelligent, honest interviews with members of the prostitutes'-rights group COYOTE and sex worker/performance artist Annie Sprinkle, forums on free speech with Bay Area writers and editors, and reports on the men's antiviolence movement. One of *Spectator's* best regular features is a

weekly roundup of sex-related news by author Pat Califia.

Spectator is all that remains of the sixties underground paper, *The Berkeley Barb*, and *Spectator* maintains the same community-support focus as *The Barb*. How many sex publications can you think of that devote a page to local efforts like suicide prevention, battered women's shelters, men overcoming violence, AIDS info, groups offering free legal advice...?

Hope springs eternal. In October, California NOW had a State Board meeting. I attended this meeting as the S.F. NOW delegate. I presented the "porn" resolution from the 1991 National NOW Conference. I asked that it be endorsed with a request to National to pass it. I argued that Na-

Parents' Corner



Family Book About Sexuality. Mary Calderone, MD and Eric Johnson. Absolutely the best sexuality reference book for families. There's something for every member, and the information is solid and very easy to understand. With outstanding sections on gender identity, parent/child conflict, disability and AIDS, as well as a handy encyclopedia of common sex terms. #BF-473, \$8.95 1981, 330 pp.



Raising Sexually Healthy Children. Lynn Leight, RN. This author helps parents assess their own values about sexuality and guides them through their child's development, offering valuable tips on how to get children to talk openly about sex. The author tackles an enormous amount of information, but through her numerous anecdotes and first person accounts, she conveys very sound advice on a variety of common parental concerns. #BR-245, \$8.95 1989, 284 pp.



Show Me Yours! Understanding Children's Sexuality. Ronald and Juliette Goldman. This book gets an A+ in the area of sex education for parents, since it reveals the large amount of misinformation children have about sex, where they get it and why someone (i.e. a parent) needs to take responsibility for teaching the facts. The authors surveyed children ages 5-15 in five countries, asking specific questions about sex, reproduction, nudity and what they wanted to know about sex. Their answers are both humorous and startling. #BS-567, \$7.95 1988, 268 pp.



Straight from the Heart: How to Talk with Your Teenagers About Love and Sex. Carol Cassell, PhD. A great book for parents who want practical advice on how to help their hip teenagers become sexually sane and sensible people. The author sensitively addresses issues of sexual manipulation, dating, unwanted pregnancy, broken hearts, homosexuality and STDs—even providing practice sessions so parents can compare their responses with the author's responses to the questions teens are most likely to ask. #BS-493, \$7.95 1987, 255 pp.



—The Sexuality Library

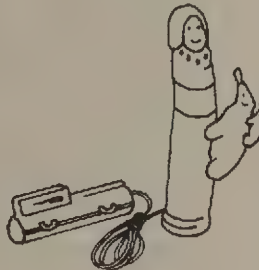
Catalogs \$2 each (\$3 for both) from Open Enterprises, 1210 Valencia Street, San Francisco, CA 94110.

Your one-stop sex-info shop. SL's new catalog features books, videos and magazines on virtually any aspect of sexuality that might interest you — female, male, children's and adolescents' sexuality, sex info for older people, erotic literature, humor, sexual politics, and "sex for one."

The Sexuality Library carries most of the sex zines reviewed here, plus a selection of exceptional erotic videos (chosen and reviewed by Susie Bright) for sale and rental.

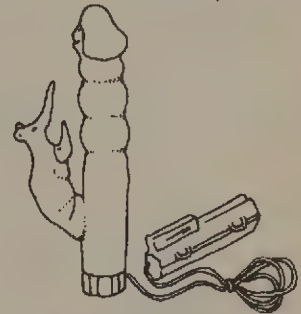
For a dollar extra, you can get the catalog from SL's sister enterprise, Good Vibrations, featuring high-quality sex toys for women and men. The catalog even has a whole section of safe-sex paraphernalia and information.

Legend has it that centuries ago, in Japan, people weren't allowed to make sex toys which resembled genitalia. As a result, dildos were carved to look like living creatures, and the modern-day vibrating versions are what you see below. The battery packs feature separate variable speed controls for each "branch."



Beaver: Our budget model is an old favorite. The swiveling vinyl figurine (4" long, 1 1/4" in diameter) provides vaginal stimulation while the beaver attachment flicks against the clitoris. Uses three C batteries. Black, almond, hot pink.

#TB-053, \$34.00



Great King: Perfect for those who want a longer insertable portion (6" long, 1 1/2" in diameter), the clit-tickler on the Great King resembles a kangaroo. Uses three C batteries. Clear vinyl.

#TB-228, \$44.00

—Good Vibrations Catalog

tional NOW must lose its fear to act on this issue. Women's sexuality and its portrayal are emotional and pivotal issues for all women. As the largest and most powerful women's rights organization in the country, NOW weakens the status of all women in this country by skirting the issue.

Sex being a lively topic for discussion, we spent an entire evening in a caucus. I maintained that NOW needs a national policy to guide individual members and chapters acting in the name of the organization. NOW has been paralyzed by the desire to find a way to control men's sexual fantasies and thereby rid us of all sexual crimes. This is the censor's lie. It is an impossible quest. It puts the free expression of women's sexuality and fantasies at equal if not greater risk than that of the men it seeks to control. After all, the interpreters and enforcers of these laws will be a small

handful of very powerful (or at least power hungry) males.

[Annie Sprinkle]: To me all prostitution is sacred, everything is sacred, everyone is sacred. I think even the most raunchy, strung out street hooker is sacred because they are all providing some kind of service, even if it is providing a service for men to get their wallet ripped off; some people need that in their lives because they feel so guilty about sex that they want to be punished. I've been a prostitute for 18 years. For the past five years, I've pretty much only seen one guy which I write about in *Annie Sprinkle Post Porn Modernist* [Torch Books, 1991]. I've been seeing him for 16 years. I love prostitution, I love seeing my guy Murray. I feel I do it well. I am proud to be a sacred prostitute. At this point, I have devoted my life to learning everything I can about sex, everything.

Backlash

This is the book for those who have puzzled and despaired, like me, over magazine and newspaper articles and TV news shows declaring the "death of feminism." Susan Faludi takes accurate and eye-opening aim at the media's assault on the social, economic, and political gains women have made since the 1970s. Her thesis is simple: when women begin to assume and to covet roles outside the home and family, an unorganized, unplanned, but powerful resistance forms. In the last ten years, this "backlash" has consisted mostly of media stories whose basic message is that feminism is women's worst enemy. Faludi cites recent and much-circulated myths supposedly based on scholarly research (exhausted and guilt-ridden working women are running back home to be with their children, single college-educated women past thirty are more likely to be killed by a terrorist than to marry), and examines how these "statistics" are often either just plain wrong, or twisted and appropriated by a male-dominated media to suit antifeminist purposes.

The scope of this book is enormous, and what makes its general message so interesting is its discussion of recognizable particulars. Faludi inspects destructive "backlash" images of women perpetuated by cosmetic and clothing companies, television shows, movies, the New Right, and popular psychology books. She analyzes the "masculinist" work of influential thinkers like George Gilder, Robert Bly, and Allan Bloom, showing how their ideas have helped to form "backlash" propaganda, and then been used and abused for its perpetuation. Even such feminist heroines as Carol Gilligan and Betty Friedan do not escape censure; Faludi sees their "revisionist" feminism, which praises women's elevation of familial and human relationships over adherence to abstract ideologies and the desire for power, as another way of keeping women in their proverbial place.

The arguments are logical and thorough, and the writing is clear and free of academic jargon: this book is for the laity. The point is made early and remains consistent; but there is much fascinating evidence that may help a backlash against the backlash. —Ann Norton

■ If the contemporary backlash had a birthplace, it was here within the ranks of the New Right, where it first took shape as a movement with a clear ideological agenda.

Peril or Pleasure

This video explores an ongoing feminist debate: Is there such a thing as feminist pornography? Can performing in or producing sexually explicit films and magazines be an act of liberation in which women take control of their sexuality, making conscious choices about how best to use their minds and bodies? Or is all pornography destructive, objectifying women and playing to men's worst stereotypes?

Producer Andrea Torrice presents compelling spokeswomen for both sides. At one extreme, Evelina Kane of Women Against Pornography states that pornography "is the most prevalent form of sex education in this country." This, Kane maintains, distorts the self-images of teenagers and adults alike. At the other end of the spectrum, Candida Royale, an ex-porn star and head of Femme Productions (a woman-oriented adult

The New Right leaders were among the first to articulate the central argument of the backlash — that women's equality is responsible for women's unhappiness. They were also the first to lambaste the women's movement for what would become its two most popularly cited, and contradictory, sins: promoting materialism over moral values (i.e., turning women into greedy yuppies) and dismantling the traditional familial support system (i.e., turning women into welfare mothers). The mainstream would reject their fevered rhetoric and hellfire imagery, but the heart of their political message survived — to be transubstantiated into the media's "trends."

■ For months, Bly has refused requests for an interview — his media interviews are largely with men — but today he accedes to a brief conversation over lunch. Between man-sized bites of a sandwich, the poet says he bars women from most of his events because men need a sanctuary from a female-dominated world. "There's no place for the warrior in this country. The feminists have taken over from the Catholic priests." And this is only the start of the female incursion. "I just see it getting worse and worse. Men will become more and more insecure, farther from their own manhood. Men will become more like women, women will try to be more like men. It's not a good prospect." What evidence does he have that all this is happening, or that feminism is actually turning men "soft"? The venerable poet flies into a sudden rage. "I don't need evidence. I have brains, that's how I know. I use my brains." He refuses to answer any more questions and swivels his chair until he's facing the side wall. An uncomfortable silence falls over the room; the two women

film company) says about porn, "What I'm going to do is take it into my own hands, do it the way I think it should be done, and have control over it. That to me is a very feminist thing." Also featured are adult film director/producer Annie Sprinkle and San Francisco's own sex diva, Susie Bright.

Peril or Pleasure doesn't pretend to come to any definitive answers on the pornography/feminism debate, but it is one of the clearest presentations of the issues yet. *Peril or Pleasure* is an important contribution to the debate over women's rights and issues of sexual freedom. —Richard Kadrey

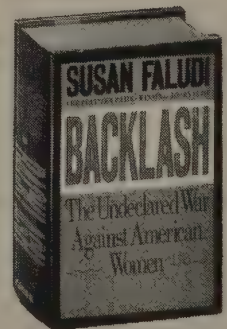
Peril or Pleasure

Andrea Torrice, Producer

\$39 (\$49 overseas) postpaid from Torrice Productions, 1230 Market Street #123, San Francisco, CA 94103; 415/826-0128

from the Jung Center try to coax him back to good spirits with murmured compliments about his "brilliance" and offers of more apple juice.

● On the national front, the real "antimotherhood" crusaders weren't feminists, either; they were New Right leaders, conservative politicians, and corporate executives, who not only ignored mothers' rights but attacked them. It was, after all, Phyllis Schlafly, not Gloria Steinem, who led the opposition to congressional child care and maternity leave bills for two decades. It was the Chamber of Commerce, not the National Organization for Women, that was the single most effective force behind the defeat of the 1988 Family and Medical Leave Act.



Backlash

Susan Faludi, 1991; 552 pp.

\$24 (\$26 postpaid) from Random House/Order Dept., 400 Hahn Road, Westminister, MD 21157; 800/733-3000 (or Whole Earth Access)

Talking Back to Sexual Pressure

Elizabeth Powell, a clinical psychologist and professor, believes that ours is a culture unprecedented in its variety and proliferation of potential and realized sexual danger: sexually transmitted diseases, rape, teenage pregnancy, sexual abuse and dysfunctions, and even lack of erotic desire are just some of the emergencies that show America to be "a sexual disaster area." In response to this catastrophe, she has written a handbook — for men and women, homosexuals and heterosexuals, teenagers and adults — on how to say "no" to unwanted or risky sex, to discourage sexual harassment, to get help if you are a victim of either, and to stand up for your natural rights of sexual choice and privacy.

This is not, for the most part, a theoretical tract. Powell suggests specific responses in realistically imagined situations and conversations, such as just what a person in a new romantic relationship might say to a pressing partner to gently indicate a desire to wait, or how a student whose professor is coming on to her can try to move their discussion away from the personal, or how an amorous couple might practically discuss each other's health. There are recommendations for avoiding acquaintance rape and handling obscene phone calls, and ideas for showing the entertainment media that sex and savagery do not inevitably go together. Powell saves her strongest rhetoric for this last topic, believing TV, films, and trashy books to have promoted

many of these ills, and exhorting readers not to become desensitized to the omnipresent fictionalized violence they dish out or to accept the macho sexual attitudes they endorse.

This is a useful, straightforward book with a simple but powerful message: the sexual goblins'll getcha if you don't watch out, but you can watch out.

—Ann Norton

Male Messages

Little boys pick up the message that they are supposed to be powerful, not act like a "sissy," and compete at all times ("score"). When a young woman pressures a young man, he believes he should stay in the "powerful" role. Everything in his society has taught him to believe this "fact." The powerful role has one major requirement in this situation: A powerful man must conquer a woman sexually, certainly not submit to any of her requests. So when a woman insists that a man use a condom, the man's fear of giving in may cause him to refuse. This is dangerous to his health, and to hers.

Female Messages

On the other hand, we do not encourage women to seek success and power, but instead to value love and relationships. Girls pick up the message that they are supposed to be nice and loving, and to wait until they are "chosen." So a woman may be scared of losing the love of a man if she shows power by insisting on sexual protection. In some minority communities, for example, it is unthinkable for a woman to insist on a man's doing anything — he loses machismo if he gives in. Women need to learn new skills in order to insist upon condoms and other sexual protection. But they also need to believe that they can be feminine and still have power over themselves.

Women's Action Agenda '21

In December 1991, I found myself in a small auditorium in Paris, falling in love with Bella Abzug. She and I and several hundred other citizen activists had come to town as participants in a conference titled "Roots of the Future." As representatives of grassroots nongovernmental organizations concerned with ecological and economic justice, our mission was to offer a perspective to the June '92 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).

Coming from over one hundred nation-states, the delegates espoused political philosophies ranging from Marxism to anarchism, with every shade of red and Green in between. Not surprisingly, we found it impossible to issue a grand, humane synthesis on the global problematic.

But that was OK, because the World Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet, held in Miami, Florida back in November, had done so: it's the **Women's Action Agenda '21**. Bella and her colleagues were advocating its endorsement by the Paris conference. She and a handful of other women who had worked on it took an evening apart to summarize the Congress and the Agenda, and to strategize ways to lobby and/or make a splash at UNCED. It was their unbeatable combination of political savvy, intelligence, and passion for simple justice (to say nothing of their remarkably good humor) that just about made me swoon.

And, upon reading the **Women's Action Agenda '21**, I experienced my first outbreak of honest hope in years. We can do this.

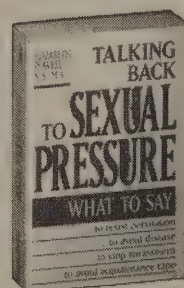
Based on the "four days of expert testimony, jury panels, and workshop discussions" in Miami and "compilation of the work, ideas, and values of 1,500 women from around the world," the organizers derived an inspiring and tough program. If followed, it will carry us into the twenty-first century by calling a halt to the practice of treating all of Earth's usually voiceless beings — other species, children, landscapes, mothers, and indigenous communities — as either ore or overburden, fair game for the market economy.

For a brilliant intro to what we had better be about for the remainder of the century, upon our lives and sacred honor, give this thing a read. —Stephanie Mills

As caring women, we speak on behalf of those who could not be with us, the millions of women who experience daily the violence of environmental degradation, poverty, and exploitation of their work and bodies. As long as Nature and women are abused by a so-called "free market" ideology and wrong concepts of "economic growth," there can be no environmental security. Rainforest dwellers, island peoples, the inhabitants of fragile arid zones are threatened with displacement and dispossession due to human disruption and pollution of vulnerable ecosystems. In a world that condones such practices, there lies little hope for long-term survival or peace among peoples.

Women's Action Agenda '21

\$5 postpaid from WEDO/Women USA Fund, Inc., 845 Third Avenue, 15th Floor, New York, NY 10022; 212/759-7982



Talking Back to Sexual Pressure

Elizabeth Powell, 1991; 255 pp.

\$9.95 (\$11.95 postpaid) from CompCare Publishers, 2415 Annapolis Lane, Minneapolis, MN 55441; 800/328-3330 (or Whole Earth Access)



NEWS FROM THE WELL

BY ROBERT ROSSNEY

Illustrations by Sandra Ford

DESCRIBING THE WELL to someone who hasn't seen it is frustrating. Before I can talk about what makes it a passion, I either get tangled up in explaining the technology or using some strained metaphor ("it's an electronic commons," or "it's a virtual meeting-place for people from all over the country") that raises more questions than it answers.

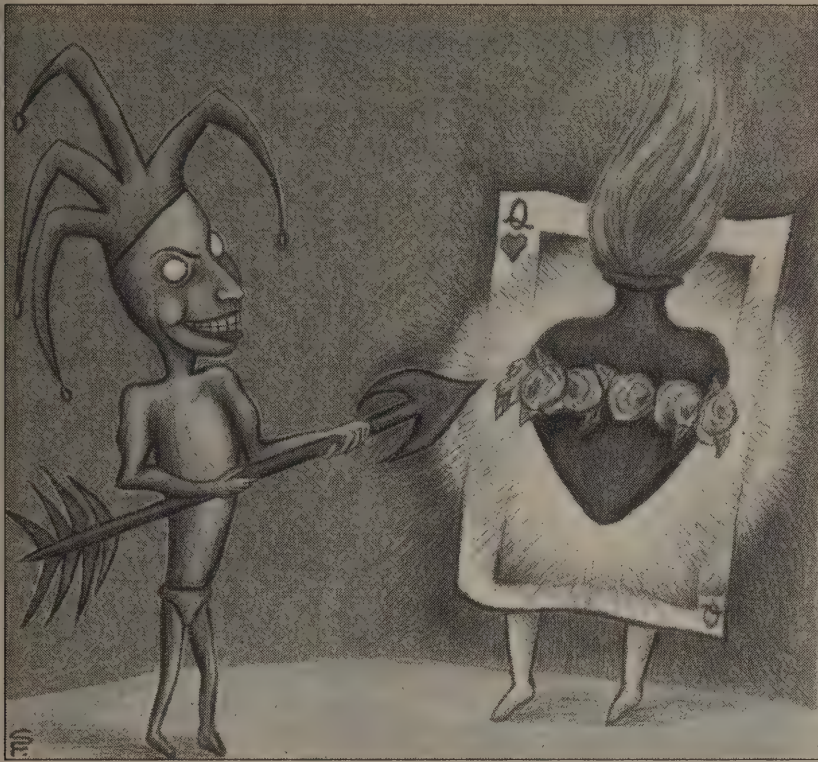
The WELL is nothing more than people talking to people. But so is almost everything else that matters. And that's the problem: everybody knows conversation, but until you've seen the WELL, it's hard to see how computers and phone lines figure into it. It's too easy to get the impression that the WELL is just glowing letters on computer screens. What's the appeal of that?

To give you a sense of the WELL's variety and depth, I've dipped into *Miscellaneous*, one of the conferences (the other is *Unclear*) dedicated to nothing in particular or, rather, to everything under the sun. A recent topic on death and how we deal with it brought out this story from Patrick Lopez:

My grandmother died right before last Thanksgiving. She was a very vibrant, lively 84-year-old woman. She was a devout Catholic, but was one of those lucky few to whom organized religion provides a sense of calm and peace. Although she was a devout Catholic, she was very open and accepting of people that had different lifestyles and beliefs than hers. Carmen had a true generosity of spirit that is really a rare treasure. As she had grown older, especially after my grandfather died, I was concerned that she was lonely or felt isolated. After she died, however, all of these people kept stopping by to express their condolences and I realized that she had had a much more active social life than I had ever imagined.

In addition to being a devout Catholic, Carmen was a devout poker player. My earliest memories of her include the knowledge that she would spend certain evenings playing "cards." She was good and played with a serious group of Houston poker players. Her poker skills are legendary in my family and although she would tutor people, she never really communicated the depth of her knowledge. Her tutees usually felt that she was leaving something out, crucial bits of knowledge that would always give her an edge in any game she might play with them in the future.

On her last day, 11/22/91, she had a poker game planned. She and my father talked on the phone every morning and she had told him that she was going to play poker. I had always assumed that all of her poker games were played among a group of friends on a casual basis, but I found out after she died that she was playing poker in some kind of illegal gambling house. There had even been a robbery at this place a couple of weeks previous to this and some of her jewelry had been stolen. She hadn't told anyone about it be-



They described passing the time in jail composing poems in their minds and then reciting them to one another. They told me one poem, about regretting the death of an inmate, which ended something like, "We wish you could be here/To share your joy with us." I found nothing forced or false about these men's attitudes; rather, it seemed clear that they had surrendered to death and come out the other side. They had learned death's lesson, so that they feared nothing (and they risked reimprisonment just by talking to me).

Fear of death, I believe, is really nothing less than fear of life; acceptance of death enables one to live in freedom.

In a topic called "The Quest for Mental Sharpness," which started out inquiring into what people did to keep mass culture from turning their brains to mush, Mark Carranza brings us another dimension of human experience:

One fine day at the end of the week my friend and I decided to take an acid trip. Thinking that driving would be a silly idea, we merrily jumped on the bus, and transferring ever so carefully, were soon at our destination.

We bought two hits, admiring their quality of presentation: trimmed from a sheet of white Japanese family crests on a black background. With this, and a peck from my voluptuous dealer friend, we were on our way. We decided that we would enjoy walking back to Irvine from Costa Mesa, enjoying the sights and sounds of lower Orange County. Ah, the twilight in the headlights.

We were walking though the shire of Newport Beach with conversa-

cause she didn't want anything to jeopardize her poker.

Anyways, she's playing poker and gets a headache. The people she's playing with encourage her to lie down for a bit. After a while one of them goes to check on her. She insists that she's OK, refuses to have her son called. She closes her eyes again and asks, "What was that in your hand, an ace and a deuce?" and checks out.

I miss her terribly, but what I find so hopeful about her death was the fact that she was living in the present until the very end and died doing something that she felt a passion for. Although she was Catholic, she wasn't worried about any past sins or transgressions, she wasn't nervous about "meeting her maker," she wasn't saying any prayers or singing any hymns — she was absorbed with her immediate

surroundings and interests. I just hope that I am lucky enough to have a similar exit — I know how rare this is.

A bit later in the same topic, Jacques Leslie moves from those who died to those who survived:

As a journalist in Vietnam (where death was the subtext), I met 13 Vietnamese men — all supporters of the Viet Cong — who had been recently released from the notorious "tiger cages" inside a South Vietnamese prison. They had all endured unimaginable torture. They bore scars all over their bodies, the result of beatings they'd received. They had all worn shackles for periods ranging from five to ten years, and in consequence their leg muscles had atrophied, so that not one of them could walk. Half their fellow inmates died while they were in prison, and the stories they told of their treatment defied imagination.

Yet these men were exultant, joyous, the happiest men I had ever met.

tions of peregrinations and hallucinations, creating ideas you would be proud to sell in the Bullock's cutlery department, if alas, they were not but made of air and vibration. About this time, noticing that our shirts were not tucked in, we were accosted by a large man wearing an automobile and a gun.

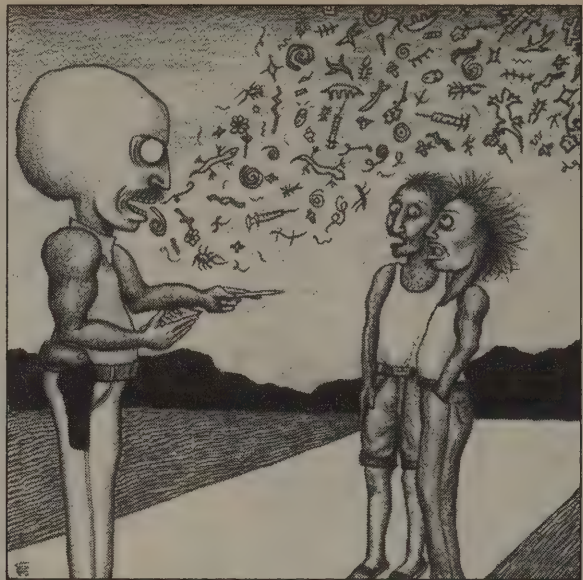
I exclaimed that we were drunk and walking home lest we cause injury. But alas for us and woe. I had a warrant for my arrest for not appearing on a bald-tires ticket for my Citroen, and my friend also for a bicycle ticket. We were quite efficiently handcuffed and spirited towards a contrite visit in the local jail.

Driving as if the power to do so was his alone, the large man with the inevitable mustache took us within sight of the fabled incarceration facility. Ah, what an experience we had that evening. At that very moment the radio effused with barked commands and off we went, the unhappy trio.

Reaching our destination at the side of Pacific Coast Highway, an equally unhappy and slightly drunk well-dressed man joined our unlikely number. On our return, trying to keep our spirits up and tripping HARD, I discovered that this young dandy was an architect, studied at Cal Poly and had spent a year in Denmark, where a friend of mine had been at the same time in the same exchange program. We joked about the design of the Copenhagen police station, a famed edifice, architectural-wise.

Our cell was peculiarly painted the exact color of urine, and had, being constructed solely of concrete block, the acoustics of a nightmare. Any speech, any sound would reverberate endlessly. You could not recognize your voice for its reverberation.

I started a conversation, difficult as it was, with the architect about the esoteric acoustic properties designed



into the cathedrals of 12-14th century Europe by the alchemical masons. Each cathedral resonates at specific frequencies, and recognizing this, composers would create masses in different keys specifically for certain cathedrals. An A-minor mass would make the stones weep in eerie harmonies, or a G-major organ fugue would tease such vibrations out of the walls as to make them sing. My poor wasted friend had yet to speak since the arrest.

Of course we embarked to discover the resonating frequency of that jail. With whistles, chirps and hums we set out to create that Teslaesque frequency that, if sustained, would tear down the walls, or at least sound neat.

About this time, a querulous lout removed us, one at a time, to arrange the terms of our stay. A typical bad-guy routine followed thusly: they were duty-bound, even though there was no one else in the cells, to take us to the odious overcrowded (gasp) ORANGE COUNTY JAIL, where, raped and abused by murderers and worse, we would await trial.

UNLESS we could come up with the then-astronomical sum of 350 dollars in half an hour.

Mental sharpness consists of calling your parents at three in the morning on a Sunday night to bail you out of jail while walls pulsate around you and the warrant officer looks horny, staring you in the eyes while on the phone.

And finally, in a topic about the odd tricks we can play with our bodies, Alexander McIntire shows us how his particular brand of mental sharpness goes clean back to the cradle:

I can turn my eyelids inside out, or at least the flaps inside of them. It looks genuinely horrible, so I had a wonderful time grossing out substitute teachers in elementary school. Apparently I taught myself to do this when I was about fifteen months old, and almost brought on a stroke when my great-grandmother came in to see why I was laughing in my crib in the middle of the night. ☹

In the Servitude of Power

We hear the term sustainable a lot these days, especially sustainable development. This book chronicles the many civilizations before us that proved to be unsustainable — it's world history as shaped by energy needs. How the shaping has occurred is often complex and sometimes unexpected. The authors take us from prehistory all the way to the present and our probable fate. They conclude that irrevocably (and perhaps inevitably) wrecking the environment is nothing new; recent technology has just made it easier and faster.

This sounds as if it could be dry reading, and it is; possibly it didn't translate gracefully from the original French. There is also a bit too much left-wingish emphasis on capitalism as the principal villain. But I've not seen a better review of the downward slide of civilizations that failed to control the consequences of energy demands. This analysis shows a definite pattern to the process of degradation and demise, a path that we seem to be following despite plenty of precedent from which to learn. It is a reminder and a warning. —J. Baldwin

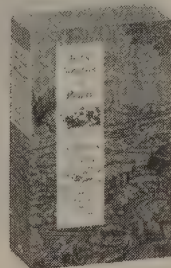
Energy applied to production made it possible to improve labour productivity and intensity, but the working day was still limited by the natural alternation of days and nights; energy forms suitable for artificial lighting were therefore developed so that labour and the new machines could be used more extensively. Baron Dupin stressed the point in a report to the Chamber of Commerce of Paris in 1847: 'It is therefore extremely advantageous to have these mechanisms operate indefatigably by reducing rest breaks to the shortest duration possible: perfection in this respect would be to work all the time,' and for workers 'following the mechanical engine, to extend their work towards day and night work, advancing ever nearer to perpetual motion.'

As always in history, structures implacably impose their logic on those who content themselves with the exercise of political power. A headlong rush into electro-nuclear energy, justified by the economic weight of an existing nuclear industry, comparable to that of the car industry, has been followed to the detriment of a coherent and thrifty energy policy. Nuclear electricity producers and the fastbreeder lobby have continued to lay down their law. In fact, when all is said and done, the maintenance of the programmes underway in an industrialized region of the world attests to the formidable historic inertia of capitalism's energy structures today.

The main sources of energy, on land as well as at sea, therefore remained the wind and above all humans and animals. The Greeks' efforts focused on improving the converters which transmitted the latter two energy forms, so that their achievements were most significant in the field of mechanics; thus classical Greece and especially the Hellenistic age have been described as the true birthplace of the machine era.

Energy technologies which have fallen into disuse are sometimes recycled or revived in different guises. Thus energy systems are endowed with a high degree of adaptability to technical innovation, to sudden spurts of energy demand, to new tools and new relations of production. The case of slavery is a good example: after having almost fallen into disuse in medieval Christian Europe, it experienced a new golden age as European capitalism surged across the Atlantic and, between 1666 and 1800, transferred at least eight million African slaves to its American colonies. These virgin lands, northern America and to a lesser extent equatorial and tropical America, were almost empty

of humans and work animals and therefore lacking in energy equipment when they were opened up; a tremendous clamour for energy arose. The human engine was the ultimate solution to the Americas' prolonged energy shortage, and by the same token the prime cause of the long-term historical weakening of African peoples.



In the Servitude of Power

(Energy and Civilization Through the Ages)

Jean-Claude Debeir, Jean-Paul Deléage and Daniel Hémerly, 1991; 286 pp.

\$19.95 (\$22.95 postpaid) from Humanities Press International, 165 First Avenue, Atlantic Highlands, NJ 07716; 908/872-0717

There Are No Electrons

The Mysteries of Electricity are Revealed in this bizarre and often amusing textbook-in-a-clownsuit. It'll seem needlessly frivolous and even flippant to the annoying minority that have no trouble copping an A in physics. For the other four billion or so earth citizens, it's about the easiest and dearest course in basic electrics imaginable. It serves well as a refresher course or a solid introduction to the complicated stuff. The presentation is accessible to a sixth-grader, yet I'd guess that most adults

would not be gagged by the author's antics. If you can hack this style of teaching, you'll get what you need. —J. Baldwin

•
 $E = IR$

The formula starts with enthusiasm (voltage), so I decided to keep track of "E" in the other two versions. Turns out it's always on top. Trying to determine the current? Use this:

$$I = E/R$$

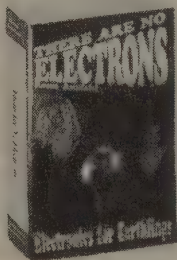
Trying to determine the resistance? Use this:

$$R = E/I$$

Lars could have made it easier, one could argue, but then it wouldn't have been jargon, it wouldn't have been electronics, it wouldn't have been nearly as much fun. Ohm's Law is worth a little effort. There's really nothing as impressive as slipping little formulas into an otherwise ordinary conversation.

There are probably three or four million Americans who understand Ohm's Law as well as you do right now; who knows, you may run into one of them. Maybe you'll even fall in love with one of them. At least you won't be embarrassed if they cautiously bring it up. If that many people can handle Ohm's Law, you can too.

On the other hand, three or four million people represent less than two percent of the American population. You have joined a very exclusive club.



There Are No Electrons

(Electronics for Earthlings)

Kenn Amdahl, 1991; 322 pp.

\$12.95 (\$14 postpaid) from Clearwater Publishing Co., P. O. Box 1153, Arvada, CO 80001-1153

T

WO WEEKS AGO, in the ground-floor studio of an unkempt Berkeley brownshingle, I became eight years old and had my first profound literary experience. Moments later I was encountering Steven King — again as a virgin, so to speak. Then it was beginning the descent to an African airport with the newest Peter Matthiessen propped on my seatbelt. Then a bit of Elmore Leonard at the beach. Then the last hard push (wee hours, paper duel!) to wind up *The Brothers Karamazov*.

All this heady book experience was packed into a little less than fifteen minutes, during which I was liberated (as opposed to confined) in a deep, soft armchair festooned with insulated wires and equipped with a large, egg-shaped helmet that looked a lot like the old-fashioned hair dryers in beauty salons. The resemblance is not coincidental. My hosts, cult hacker hero Robbie Guilder and former Intel exec and longtime Deadhead Baba Jones, had in fact ransacked Bay Area junk stores for just such antique dryers.

"They're perfect," Robbie says. "Roomy enough for the complex circuitry of TR, and also good sound excluders. Besides" — he looks a shade devilish here — "the beauty parlor always had a touch of risqué fantasy, letting yourself go, gossip and dreams, you know?"

So what is this about, you may be wondering. What exactly did they *do*?

Tantamount Reading's not that simple. On the obvious level, one sits down in the deep chair and dons the helmet, which has a built-in, completely lightproof blindfold. Next Guilder unfolds an electronic diptych on the subject's lap. With this experimental model one has to wait for the program to start before touching this surface, but already it has the heft and size of a hard-cover edition:

In setting up the interview/trial I gave Baba a menu of titles — some old favorites and some new stuff just spotted at Black Oak Books. The mainframe has paired my menu with analogs from MELVYL, so I am basically already wired to the whole UC library.

A MIRACLE

At first, in absolute darkness, I am aware of the weight of the helmet, a power cable across my instep, Robbie saying something to Baba about Montana's elbow.

Then, gradually, a miracle begins. I hear a door open, some indistinct voices and footsteps, and outside a single car goes by. Then the door closes, and I become aware of faint house sounds. A crackling fireplace, a whisper of wind under eaves, a light thumping — a dog's tail on the hearth. Simultaneously there are odors — TR wizardry's latest advance — a worn sofa, a half-eaten apple, woodsmoke. When I touch the diptych a new smell overrides the others. It is the pungent, mucilaginous odor of the printed page, with a hint of embalmed matter — a leaf, butterfly wing, or cookie crumb.

The TR experience is exquisitely timed. The exact instant I am aware of feeling like a child, a voice begins, delivering the opening lines of *Treasure Island*. And it is the perfect voice: a fruity, boyish cockney, colloquial but not flamboyant, and it moves into one's mind naturally. There is, amazingly, very little sense of being read *to*. It was the same with *Maximum Bob* at the beach. The surf, sunscreen lotion, and grains of sand between coarse pages made me forget entirely the flat, terse voice.

"That's the real breakthrough," Robbie explains. "The

Editor Howard Rheingold's "fervent hope" of six months ago — that Whole Earth Review had published its last piece about virtual reality — is hereby dashed.

Will Baker's closest concessions to virtual reality are the tape deck in his car and the books he listens to on the hour-long commute to a teaching job at the University of California, Davis. "Four round trips equals a novel," says Baker. Maybe someday we will rebuild a workable mass-transit system, and call it "virtual commuting."

Baker's reminiscence of Gary Snyder and Allen Ginsberg, "Poets on the Bum," appeared in the Spring 1991 WER. His next book, *Ghost Hunter*, will be published in 1993 by Pocket Books. —Richard Nilsen

READING

words have to kind of *appear* in your mind, unobtrusively. Otherwise you miss the whole experience of reading, that sense of gobbling up actual words, drifting clear away. That's the *sine qua non*, and the voice has to be just right."

A Robert Morley mimic did all the Stevenson and Kipling. Voices which recall the movies made from period classics have an automatic enhancer, a "visuals kicker." "We use 'em for flavoring, like spices," Robbie says. Hence skilled Bogart and Mitchum imitators do all the hardboiled stories, and Dietrichs and Garbos do everything from *Heidi* to *Hedda Gabler*.

EERILY LIKE REALITY

The effect is eerily like glancing at a book after you've seen the movie. Which is to say, of course, eerily like reality. Guilder and Jones are unabashed in noting that they have aimed, from the beginning, at an American archetype.

"He or she used to read, used to love it. It is, after all, the most private and self-indulgent of pleasures — well, maybe one rival there — but as we grow into video, movies, rock concerts — adult recreation — we lose touch with it." Baba says this in a tone of wry confession. "We look at a book — or more likely a review. Get the gist and get out. Wait for the movie or cassette. And then domestic flights are so fast now, and interrupted by peanuts and drinks and gabby pilots, that you can barely *start* a book anyway. And who can read in an airport? I mean, who reads, period? *Really* reads?"

Guilder picks up the discussion here — he is clearly the philosopher of this team. "But we still crave the *feeling* of reading. We associate pleasure and escape and power and so forth with the experience. TR delivers those rudiments in pure form. Eventually we want . . . I mean it's the dream . . . *it*. The Dingen. The real thing. So that we're not talking 'as if,' we're talking *tantamount*."

Robbie and Baba smile intensely. Tantamount Reading means a great deal to them. They've spent three years, and Guilder's small fortune and Baba's retirement, building this unit. (Add to that an Apple grant, an NSF, and a six-figure private patron and you are comfortably into the millions.)

BY WILL BAKER

Confessed workaholics, they seldom leave their basement lab, which comes equipped with NordicTrak and an immersion tank. They rely on Berkeley's extensive delivery joints for Szechuan and pizza, and their Salvadoran "mom" handles laundry, shopping, and cleanup.

"Weird life," Baba admits, and follows up with a quick, boyish grin. "Like, tantamount to living."

"And no," Robbie adds — you can tell this is a routine — "we don't have much time to read."

They appreciate TR's paradoxes and shortcomings, and in my second session "inside the bubble" I stumble across a few for myself.

I start with a King selection (*Firestarter*), which is cut off before the end of Chapter One. TR is programmed to switch titles whenever you partially close the diptych or shift significantly in the chair (a movement the circuitry interprets as boredom or impatience). In my case, it is only a binding undergarment, but, willy-nilly, I find myself suddenly in a rusty, bustly ambience (odor of cologne) with Jane Austen.

"We look at a book — or more likely a review. Get the gist and get out. Wait for the movie or cassette."

"I think
we liked —
still like —
the idea
of nature."

I threw in one of her titles — justifying my English degree, I suppose — but am not really that fond of her stuff. I shift again, without thinking, and this time TR works perfectly and puts me into an Annie Dillard essay. Inexplicably, however, she too peters out after a few paragraphs.

LIMITS OF TR

I've exposed one of the limits of TR. To do more than a chapter or two of each book would require a very expensive program. In the slow parts of *Doctor Zhivago*, for example, a reader is normally antsy and distracted. The unit would have to ignore these signals or learn to distinguish them from revulsion, and also fade in much more peripheral sound (lawnmower, babies, traffic).

Such sophistication is currently beyond Tantamount, but Robbie and Baba are not worried about this one. "Hardly anybody sits down nowadays and reads a whole book anyway," Baba points out. "Half-chapters here and there, that's the base experience. The important thing is to match text and context, so the subject gets the perfect hit right away."

There's a problem, however, involving both text and context. By the end of session two I am definitely folding the diptych and shifting more often. "Browshing," Robbie mutters, with a grimace. The coinage is from "browse" and "rush." TR, it appears, has some of the properties of toad musk. To put it crudely, the thrill wears out so one increases the dosage. Already I am accelerating from "study" to "library," on my way to "bookstore" velocity.

Talking around this problem of addiction leads naturally enough to an anecdote: how Robbie and Baba got together and gave birth to TR. They met

at what was for both a last, desperate attempt to turn their lives around — a weekend workshop run by D-CON (Damaged Codependents On Nature). Like many immigrants to California, they were hooked early on the outdoors. They plunged too far, too soon, into every kind of fun-in-the-sun: backpacking, skiing, windsurfing, bungee-jumping, whale-watching . . .

"The tan, the bleached hair, the REI thing, subscriptions to Greenpeace — we did it all," Baba says, with a heavy sigh. "It was our whole identity. We *were* our images."

"Completely," Robbie agrees. "I was archetypal Ecoman then. It took a lot of retreats and therapists and workshops before I could face the truth."

Which was?

"Fact is," Baba laughs, "we *hated* nature. Bugs and windburn and stickers — to say nothing of sheer exhaustion. We'd rather dork around in an air-conditioned lab any day, but we just couldn't admit it. The *myth*, you know. Plus I think we liked — still like — the *idea* of nature."

"Right. Baba was quicker than I was. He realized we would rather read about nature than suffer through any more blisters and gorp. That led to our remembering how great reading used to be generally, how it was the *experience* of reading that we missed." Robbie is beaming at me. Pot-bellied, pale, a little bald, he nevertheless looks utterly pleased with himself.

"Not so much reading itself, per se," Baba clarifies. "which — let's be honest — just doesn't have it any more for most of us. Too familiar, too cumbersome. Too *dull*, actually, sometimes."

They know this is heresy, and take considerable relish in describing exactly how they are challenging the whole idea of "reading."

EXOTIC CONTEXT

Current research takes two tracks. The first, and more ambitious, mixes unusual texts and contexts so that one can (for example) sneak a look at *Ulysses* in church, or see how *The Bonfire of the Vanities* goes down in a Serbian prison, or (Baba's favorite) read *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* as a Little Golden Bath Book.

The trouble with this approach, Robbie reveals frankly, is its exorbitant price tag. Each exotic context has to be painstakingly rendered, preferably with on-location recording. We've skirted this touchy issue all day, so I blurt out the big question at last: how much for a trial session like this one?

Robbie and Baba utter a simultaneous reluctant sigh. About five grand, it turns out, if we count R&D, startup, liability — the whole nine yards.

"Sounds high," Baba agrees. "But consider how many books, in how many interesting places, you can experience in just fifteen minutes. If you counted travel, per diem, and so on, this is actually cheaper."

"Plus the convenience of your own home," Robbie chimes in. "A streamlined unit linked to an outside databank also takes up much less space than a personal library. You'd need a chair anyway. Also, no book-dusting."

READING ENHANCER

The second line of TR research is a pragmatic opposite: to use the unit simply as an enhancer for the ordinary reading experience. Early on it was clear that some readers became addicted to one context: usually a soft chair, quiet room, perhaps a window open to a garden (like this studio). TR can be programmed to deliver this background in perfect condition. One can then simply remove the blindfold and read in the ordinary way, in the chair with the window open, while the bubble interfaces sound and smell.

Baba's current pet project is a rheostatted blindfold which can fade in and out, so one can drift from a TR to a straight read and back, getting off either on the difference or on one's inability to detect any.

"Hopefully we can eventually do it so well the reader won't know when he's reading and when he is only having the experience of reading, until afterward. That would be the ultimate. Art as hypnosis." Baba has begun lumbering up and down the room. His hands flex as if they crave a pencil or calculator.

"Right." Robbie is catching the enthusiasm. "It would be utterly tantamount. Some people would actually swear they had been reading. At home in their favorite chair, grooving on *Madame Bovary*, the garden in bloom . . ."

"Well, they *would* be, wouldn't they?" I ask.

"But not *directly*, as they might think at first. I mean — how can I explain this?"

"Gertrude Stein," Baba reminds him.

"Oh yeah. See, with TR, there's more *here* here."

I think I see, but something else is still bothering me. Look, I say, what if the story is really gripping? You can lose track of where you are, what's going on. You don't

even realize you're reading. A sort of virtual reality.

"Pulp, you mean." Robbie waggles a hand, as if dispelling a noxious gas.

"The primitive reader." Baba gives me an indulgent smile. "I know who you mean. Just gimme a good story, and so on."

"Look, this is the *Bay Area*." Robbie jerks a thumb downhill. "People always know *exactly* what they are reading, and *where* they are reading it. And of course they are aware of reading when they read. A lot of people here enjoy being *seen* reading. In the park, on BART, at the bistro —"

"Actually, we have a specific program for our sort of reader. Want to try it?" Baba has a gleam in his eye, a hand on my shoulder.

I can't resist — TR is addictive — so once more into the chair and bubble. And this time I am completely blown away.

I am in a local cafe — espresso machine, Vivaldi, somebody speaking Swahili at the next table — and the book is a new one by a new writer. An ecofeminist critique of neolithic burial ceremonies.

At another nearby table I overhear someone — a rich, cultivated contralto — say, "That's one I've simply got to get. *Stone Deep Woman*. You know it?" "Yes, a *number* of people . . ." The second voice is lively, expressive, informed, young. "Obviously *completely* fascinating." "Well, he reads a lot, you can tell." "Looks more like a writer to me." "Wonder if he's meeting someone, or . . .?"

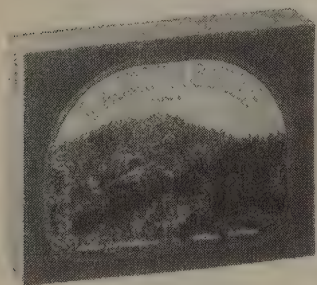
I understand Tantamount Reading now. The thrill is real, folks. This is not a toy. This is a new window into the world we didn't even realize we'd left behind. ☺

"People always know exactly what they are reading, and where they are reading it. And of course they are aware of reading when they read."

Earthship Volume II

We liked volume I (WER #70, p. 124) for its vision, convention-questioning hubris, and progress beyond the intuitive but often uncomfortable seventies-funky ways to live lightly but well on the land. Volume II offers more of the spiritual and much more of the physical detailing necessary to work with such materials as cans, tires and other "waste" — now informed and tempered by experience. Yes, by golly, experience, gained in the only possible way: Unlike most sustainable-society experiments attempted by similar folks of good intent, the Earthshippers have already built (and are continuing to build) a modest community based upon their philosophy and (doubtless) many hours of study and chat. It's called REACH: Rural Earthship Alternative Community Habitat. From the photographs, it works pretty well, and even looks good in the Southwest idiom. Inspiring even if their style isn't to your taste, because they're actually doing this instead of merely fretting and hoping. Frustrating too: in many locales, so-called democratic process will not permit such thrusts without serious battle.

—J. Baldwin



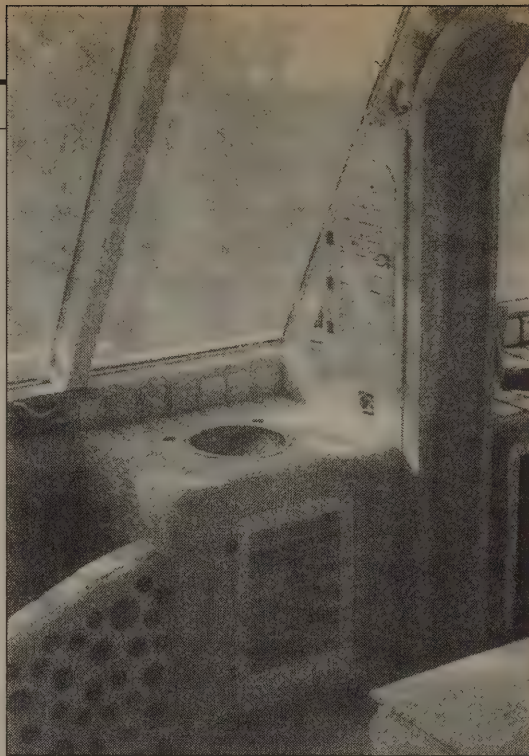
Earthship (Volume II)
Michael Reynolds, 1991; 257 pp.

\$24.95 (\$26.95 postpaid) from Solar Survival Press, P. O. Box 1041, Taos, NM 87571; 505/758-9870

Most Earthship bathrooms are placed right up against the solar front face and are filled with plants and moisture. In this situation, the bathroom becomes a whole different experience from conventional bathrooms. It becomes a captured exterior garden type space. Both the shape of the space and the nature of the space deserve something more than what conventional bathroom fixtures have to offer. For this reason we have developed methods of sculpting tubs, showers, planters and vanities out of the same materials that the bathroom walls are made of — cans and cement. This allows

you to both design and build your own fantasy indoor/outdoor bathing space.

Other than the reuse of water and the savings on plumbing fixtures another beauty of grey water systems is that you save time. You are watering your planter while you are brushing your teeth as opposed to brushing your teeth and then watering your planter. Multiple results from one action is a way of natural phenomenon of the planet and the universe.



What Bird Did That?

How to identify burds by their turds. Presented pseudoscience-straight, appropriately documented, gamished with real color photographs, apocryphal commentary, and a glossary. Informative and hilarious, especially for those who enjoy a bit of splatological humor. —J. Baldwin

American Coot *Fulica americana*

Description: Fluid, oily, stringy. A weak envelope surrounds the loose, greenish core. This splay is normally a schplerter with a multiplicity of detached lobes. In the finest examples, these form even more extended lobular patterns (splays within splays).

Food: Aquatic plants and insects.

Distribution: Southern Canada and south to southern states, with some groups wintering in Florida.

Collection: Surprisingly strong flyers, coots are found on lakes, bays and open water,

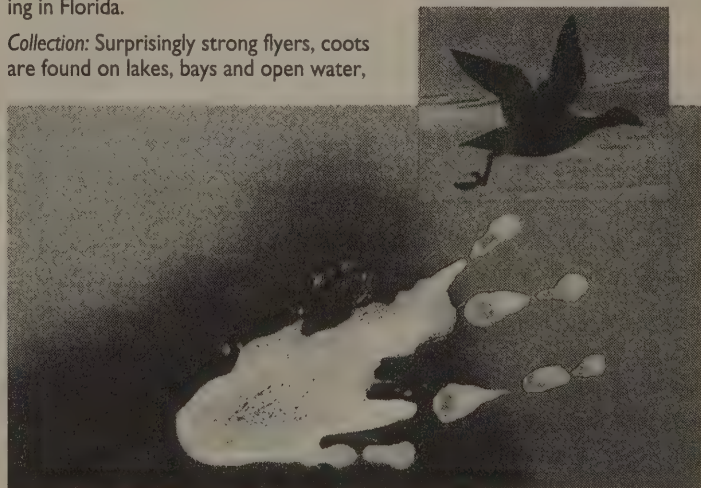
as well as in the expected swamp and river habitats. Speeds should be moderate to prevent complete deformation of the splay. May respond to sudden horn blowing — as splaymen always say, "It pays to toot a coot."



What Bird Did That?

Peter Hansard and Burton Silver, 1991; 64 pp.

\$7.95 (\$10.95 postpaid) from Ten Speed Press, P. O. Box 7123, Berkeley, CA 94707; 800/841-2665 (or Whole Earth Access)



This specimen: Horseshoe Lake, near Bruins, Arkansas, off Highway 38. August 12th, 1986. Light S. winds. Cloud. 10:30am. 25 MPH.

Passport to Freedom

When Garry Davis courageously declared himself a nationless World Citizen in 1948, he provided bureaucrats the world over with a thorny problem and an irresistible opportunity to smite a probable sinner and certain heretic. He also started a movement that's growing steadily — he claims that about a million people have registered as members of The World Government of World Citizens, and about 350,000 of them have World Passports. Mr. Davis notes that the organization has more members than 24 of the member nations of the U.N. A few nations have officially recognized the passport, and about 100 have accepted it without (usually) making a fuss. What Mr. Davis has gone through to bring World Citizenship to its present level of development and acceptance, whether madness or mandate, makes interesting reading indeed. (Should you get yourself one of those passports, huh, huh?)

Important book, I think, if only for its controversial nature. Good read, too. —J. Baldwin

These documents and the others that have evolved out of the experiences of various World Citizens over the years are not designed simply to perplex bureaucrats — though very often they do deserve it. Each one, beginning with the World Passport itself, addresses a specific aspect of the basic human right to travel and live where we please.

Some people will argue that this is impossible or even dangerous. "You can't open

the frontiers," they will say. "People will simply flood in." That reasoning reflects an approach to human relations known as "lifeboat ethics." When someone says that the developed countries — the world of the "haves" — cannot open their frontiers to the "have-nots" of Vietnam or El Salvador, the real message is: we have it and we plan to keep it.

That admission, in turn, opens up a variety of economic and political questions. Can we continue to allow the world to be unfairly divided — one quarter "have" and three quarters "have not"? Can we possibly justify the deaths of 40,000 children a day through starvation while spending billions of dollars every day on weapons? As much as eight percent of the world's gross product is wasted on armaments, and every bullet manufactured is taking bread out of someone's mouth. While a small, privileged minority lives in relative comfort, poverty, homelessness and hunger increase. How much longer can we hide behind our borders and refuse to view the problem in holistic terms? For a stranded traveler or a desperate refugee, a World Passport or an International Exit Visa may be a life-saving tool. For a political activist, it may function simply as a symbol. In truth, these documents are both — and more. They put into practice a new social contract that encompasses the sovereignty of every person and the unity of humanity as a whole.



Passport to Freedom

(A Guide for World Citizens)
Garry Davis, 1992; 208 pp.

\$12.95 (\$14 postpaid) from Seven Locks Press, P. O. Box 27, Cabin John, MD 20818; 800/537-9359

"I renounced my U.S. nationality yesterday," I said. "Now I am stateless. I don't want to break French laws. What should I do?" As I spoke, her eyes grew wide. After a pause, she bombarded me with questions: Why did I do it? Who was I really? How could she be sure I was Garry Davis? After all, anyone could walk in and say that. Where was the paper that proved my identity?

"I have no papers," I managed, "that's just the point. I think being a human being is more important than having papers. And since I'm here in France as a stranger, I'd like to know what I must do according to French law."

"According to French law," she replied despairingly, "you do not exist."

Public Therapy Buses . . .

Ideas (both ingenious and totally goofy), drastic extremes, nasty innuendos, laughs-up-sleeve, future schlock and subtle horror (you know at least some are gonna happen no matter what) make up this collection of snidely captioned drawings of proposed technology. Nifty, nasty, and occasionally hysterically funny.

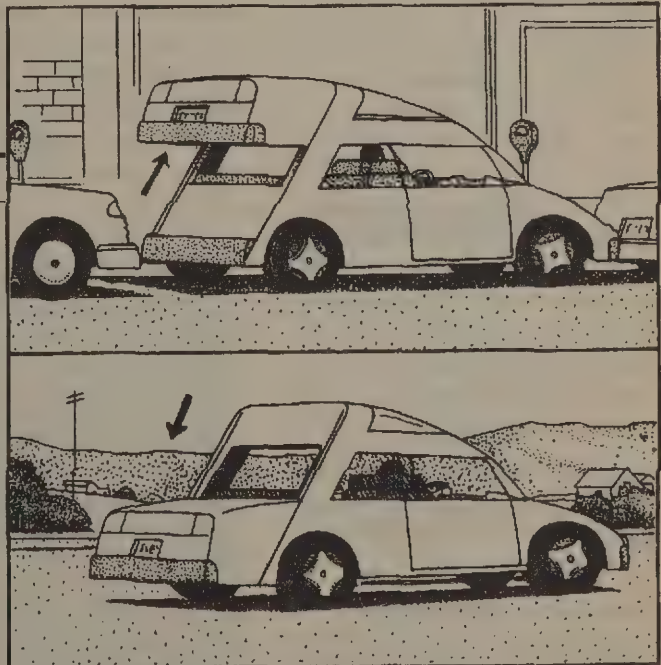
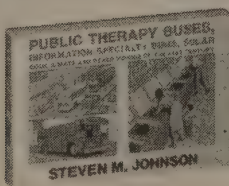
—J. Baldwin

Public Therapy Buses,

Information Specialty Bums, Solar Cook-A-Mats and Other Visions of the 21st Century

Steven Johnson, 1991; 128 pp.

\$7.95 (\$9.95 postpaid) from Publishers Book & Audio, P. O. Box 120159, Staten Island, NY 10312; 800/288-2131 (or Whole Earth Access)



In a self-shortening car, the driver raises the trunk during tight parking maneuvers by pressing a dashboard button. With the trunk raised, a hidden rear door is accessible for back seat storage of shopping bags. Road handling and gas mileage at freeway speeds are better with the trunk lowered.

FAX Americana

BY NATE JOHNSON

DURING THE CLARENCE THOMAS confirmation hearings, one senator claimed that his pockets were "stuffed with faxes" from constituents expressing their opinions on the issue. His comment, unimaginable ten years ago, points to elected officials' growing use of fax technology in monitoring public opinion. But even at \$500 to \$2,000, fax machines, indispensable to PACs and corporate lobbyists, are still beyond the price range of most private citizens.

Yet for an investment just a few dollars beyond the cost of the beginning electronic citizen's "four key pieces of hardware" — computer, communications card, modem, and telephone — listed in "Electronic Democracy" (WER #71), you can give your home computer send-fax capability without a fax machine.

Although you can spend several hundred dollars for sophisticated fax modems, a lower-end product such as the ZOFAX 48/24 (which I use) lists for \$79.95, just \$20 more than the same company's internal modem without fax. The ZOFAX comes bundled with Bit-Fax software, a user-friendly, remarkably versatile fax interface program. For Windows addicts, BitFax has recently come out with a Windows-compatible version available separately for \$69.

Using a fax machine or your modem's send-fax capabilities can have several advantages over mail or phone communication:

Timing. As you're tracking fast-moving legislation or responding to news of an imminent hearing or important vote, the mail may be too slow. And while phone lines may be staffed only during certain hours, fax machines are generally set to receive messages 24

hours a day. If you send a message outside office hours, you will be sure it's there when the office opens, you won't tie up your elected official's staff during the busiest part of the day, and you won't have to rely on somebody at the other end to accurately transcribe your message.

Cost. My average cost for US Sprint out-of-state long distance is \$.11/minute. A one-page fax without a cover page typically takes less than a minute using a 4800-baud (the slowest available) fax modem. So sending a fax message actually costs less than a single first-class stamp.

Convenience. After you hear about the most recent legislative travesty, you can dispatch a fax message without having to leave your computer or worry about paper, envelopes, or stamps. And if your fax software has merge and list-management features, it's as easy to send the same message to several destinations (with names and fax numbers

personalized) as to a single recipient.

Before you start inundating your representatives with computer-generated faxes, however, be aware that, especially at the state and local level, some offices may prefer that you phone or write instead. Some may not give out their fax numbers to constituents at all, fearing a glut of incoming faxes. When I asked New York Assemblyman Martin Luster about his policy, he replied that while he has no objection to faxes to his Albany office, his district office in Ithaca has a smaller staff and needs the machine for outgoing calls, which makes large volumes of incoming faxes "somewhat vexing."

In cases like this, you'll have to weigh the benefits of faxing (if you can even get the number) against possibly annoying the person you're trying to influence. But if you encounter what you feel is unfair or unjustified resistance, consider writing a letter explaining your reasons for communicating via fax and the importance of providing democratic access to the technology.

You may have to do some calling around to get the numbers you want. Fax numbers for US senators' and representatives' Washington offices are listed, along with other useful directory information, in *The U.S. Congress Handbook* (send \$7.95 to U.S. Congress Handbook, Box 566, McLean, VA 22101). State legislatures generally make similar directories available; these may or may not contain fax numbers. ♦

ZOFAX 48/24 SENDFAX Modem: 4800 bps fax; 2400 bps data transfer. For IBM XT/AT/386 and compatibles.

\$79.95 from Zoltrix, 47517 Seabridge Drive, Fremont, CA 94538; 510/657-1188 (fax: 510/657-1280).

The fax machine is one of the least expected, most effective political tools to emerge in recent years. Nate Johnson contacted me to remind me that our Electronic Democracy issue (WER #71) had neglected the place of fax in grassroots activism. Here he fills that gap for us. Get out there and fax for your rights!

In addition to fax technology, Johnson is especially interested in Shakespeare, Renaissance civilization, modern Chinese literature, contemporary civil-liberties issues, and the debate over "political correctness." —Howard Rheingold

Connections

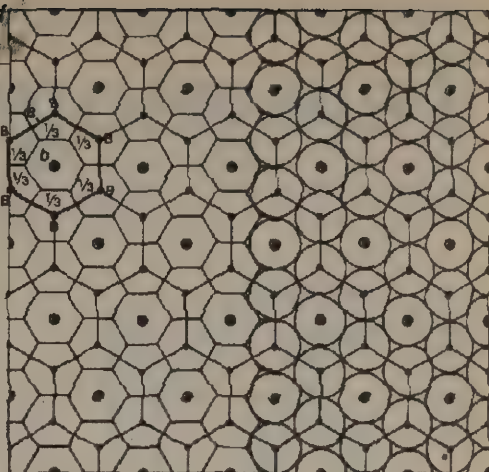
"A geometric bridge between art and science" is the avowed purpose of this startling effort. The intent is to develop a mathematical common language for discussing such diverse disciplines as chemistry and architecture — a "grammar of space," to use Arthur Loeb's phrase. Bartok, Poincaré, fractals, DNA, Islamic art, are all related here in a wonderfully transparent manner; a study of soap bubbles reveals patterns that also describe rural market territories! The concepts are delivered in stand-alone chapters, each complete with necessary background. The interrelations are made plain. You need not be a theoretical mathematician, but many readers (including me) will have to work hard to get the goodies. Your work will be well rewarded. This is no less than an early and strong move toward implementing Buckminster Fuller's call for a Comprehensive Anticipatory Design Science. Even a less-than-rigorous reading will convince you that something important is being presented here. —J. Baldwin



Connections

Jay Kappraff, 1991; 471 pp.

\$21 (\$26 postpaid) from McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17214; 800/262-4729



The entire pattern is illustrated in Figure 6.9(f) in which each B market lies at a vertex of one of the space-filling A market hexagonal domains and equidistant from three A markets. An A market hexagon is composed of one entire B market and six 1/3 sectors of the surrounding B market hinterlands, or the equivalent of three B market regions. . . .

The actual networks have highly irregular

market domains with boundaries more like the irregular shapes of random soap froths since these domains are determined by many social and geographical idiosyncracies in both time and space. Nevertheless, as Stuart Plattner reports, the anthropologist G. William Skinner has found that the dynamics of the market systems of the Chinese province of Szechwan are governed quite well by Christaller's model.

The Exploratorium Science Snackbook

And a yummy one it is, too. This satisfyingly detailed how-to-do-it enables teachers and kids to make their own versions of the hands-on exhibits featured at San Francisco's justly famed Exploratorium. (It's difficult to imagine a more fascinating science center.)

This is a far cry from the usual demo stuff that bores students and teachers alike. Matter of fact, I'm sore tempted to interrupt this review to try a few things myself. See ya. —J. Baldwin

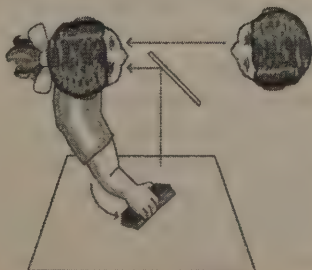
CHESHIRE CAT

Make a friend disappear, leaving only a smile behind.

Under most circumstances, both of your eyes receive fairly similar views of the world around you. You fuse these views into a single three-dimensional picture. This Snack lets you explore what happens when your eyes receive different images.

Assembly

No assembly needed.



Materials

- Hand-held mirror, approximately 4" to 6" on a side.
- A white wall or other white surface (white posterboard works well).

To Do and Notice

Sit so that the white surface or wall is on your right. Hold the bottom of the mirror with your left hand, and then put the mirror edge against your nose so that the reflecting surface of the mirror faces sideways, toward the white surface.

While keeping the mirror edge against your nose, rotate the mirror so that your right eye sees just the reflection of the white wall, while your left eye looks forward at the face of a friend who is sitting a couple of feet away. (See diagram.)

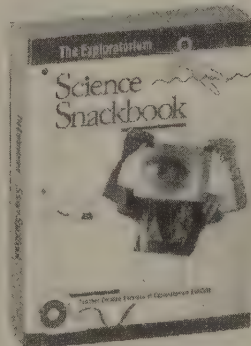
Move your hand in front of the white surface as if passing a blackboard eraser over the surface. Watch as parts of your friend's face disappear. . . .

What's Going On?

Normally, your two eyes see very slightly different pictures of the world around you. Your brain analyzes these two pictures and then combines them to create a single, three-dimensional image.

In this Snack, the mirror lets your eyes see two very different views. One eye looks straight ahead at another person, while the other eye looks at the white wall or screen and your moving hand. Your brain tries to put together a picture that makes sense by selecting bits and pieces from both views.

Your brain is very sensitive to changes and motion. Since the other person is sitting very still, your brain emphasizes the information coming from the moving hand, and parts of the person's face disappear. No one knows how or why parts of the face sometimes remain, but the eyes and the mouth seem to be the last to disappear. The lingering mouth gives rise to the name of this exhibit.



The Exploratorium Science Snackbook

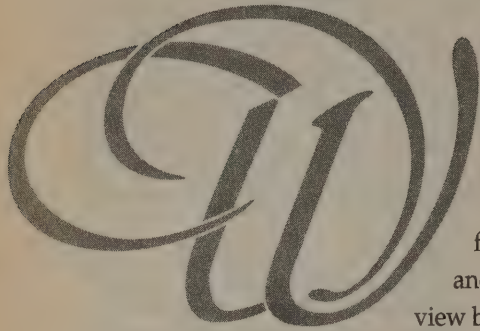
Pat Murphy and Suzanne Shimek, Editors. 1991; 260 pp.

\$24.95 (\$28.95 postpaid) from The Exploratorium/Mail Order Dept., 3601 Lyon Street, San Francisco, CA 94123; 800/359-9899 (or Whole Earth Access)

Telegeography:

MAPPING THE NEW WORLD ORDER

BY
GREGORY C. STAPLE
AND
HUGO DIXON



WHETHER A TELEPHONE IS used to seal a marriage between New York and New Delhi, to confirm a line of credit between Seattle and Singapore, or to conduct an interview between Boston and Beijing, a new

geography is being created — socially, economically, and politically.

But the telegeography of the 1990s does not resemble McLuhan's "global electronic village." The village metaphor suggests that the spread of telecom technologies has made people more equal and that the trend is universal. This is untrue.

The global telecom network is really a network of networks. It comprises over 540 million telephone exchange lines linking over 1 billion terminals in 200 countries. Some groups control the networks, while others are on the periphery.

Since 1988, the London-based International Institute of Communications

(IIC) has surveyed the volume and destination of telephone circuit traffic originating in over thirty countries. This unique database has begun to give us a more accurate picture of just how the global network is remapping the world (see map).

What have we learned thus far?

▣ Telecom traffic patterns point to the formation of three main telecontinents. These continents are centered on the US, Germany, and Japan. As one might expect, each country is a crucial junction state for regional telecommunications.

▣ A few countries send and receive most international traffic. In 1990, carriers serving the G-7 countries (US, Canada, Germany, UK, France, Italy, and Japan) accounted for approximately two-thirds of the 20.5 billion total minutes of cross-border telephone traffic. Similarly, roughly 55 percent of telephone traffic from one of the twelve European Community nations was destined to another EC state; 10 percent went to the US.

▣ Large regions of the world remain virtual tele-islands. There is more telephone traffic between the UK and Germany than there is to and from the whole African continent. And there are more telephone lines in greater New York than in India.

▣ Other regions are tele-islands to a lesser degree. Although the former Soviet Union has approximately 38 million telephone exchange lines, there is but one international exchange in Moscow to link these lines to the rest of the world. This bottleneck helped keep 1990 US telephone traffic to the Soviet Union at the same

The space we live in is not always visible. More and more often, events that affect our lives in tangible ways occur in the invisible part of the geography. When you pick up the telephone, graze through endless channels of satellite or cable TV, buy something with a credit card, you are traveling in digital communication-space.

It's time for people to find ways to visualize and map the new geographies of telecommunication. The authors have taken a first step by mapping the worldwide flow of telecommunications. In fact, a telegeographical overlay seems essential to any planet-monitoring information system, for telegeography is a concrete way of looking at the otherwise abstract territory where global-level self-awareness could take place.

Gregory C. Staple, a Washington, DC, communications lawyer, edits The Global Telecommunications Traffic Report for the International Institute of Communications. Hugo Dixon reports on telecommunications from London for the Financial Times. —Howard Rheingold



volume as that with Bahrain and Bolivia.

▣ The last 20 years have profoundly reshaped the American telecontinent. In 1969, the average US telephone line was used for over ten minutes a day, but foreign calls accounted for less than two minutes a year. Vietnam aside, the US telecontinent was oriented primarily to the Americas and Western Europe.

By 1990, Americans spent almost twice as much time calling overseas each week as they did during all of 1969. This global traffic boom expanded the American telecontinent to include Taiwan as much as Israel, the Philippines as much as the Dominican Republic, and Australia as much as Brazil. The boom also made America into a pivotal telecom power, looking east and west, with a unique

ability to exploit new telecom-based services across the global network.

▣ The scale of telecom traffic in the 1990s will be stimulated by further reductions in transoceanic call prices. Although the volume of international traffic is doubling every three to four years, the latest IIC report shows that the supply of fiber-optic cable and satellite circuits across the Atlantic and Pacific will more than triple by 1996. The capital cost per voice path on these new cable facilities, which have a useful life of over 25 years, will be approximately \$2,000.

All of these developments suggest a growing role for telegeography in orienting business and government policies.

Telegeography is a powerful tool for understanding the world because of

the way in which telecommunication has insinuated itself into virtually every branch of human endeavor. The global telecom network has become the world's nervous system, and almost all economic activity touches the network at least once.

Yet despite our daily experience of "globalization" and the "information revolution," many people still find it difficult to picture what is happening; they lack the right mental map. Most atlases are of little help: for much of its history, geography has been preoccupied with political boundaries (which slabs of territory are controlled by which nations) and natural ones.

Such concerns made sense in an earlier time. If nations could draw a line on a map, they could say that all the oil, coal, iron, or people inside the line belonged to them. Accurately charting oceans and mountain ranges was also important when topography set the bounds of a nation's commerce and communications.

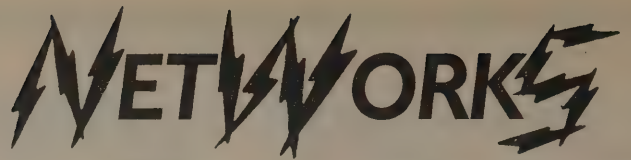
But, as noted above, in an age of global networks traditional geography is less relevant. Territorial control no longer ensures a government economic sovereignty; the key resource is often information, not oil or brute labor.

Information is the product of human minds; if you try to control people's minds they stop producing ideas (or emigrate). But once information has been produced, it is like wildfire. It dances — via phone and fax — from one part of the world to another.

By mapping network boundaries rather than political or physical ones, telegeography can capture the underlying information flows which drive contemporary economic and political events. Moreover, by focusing on the pattern of networked communications — on what is connected rather than what happens to be physically conterminous — telegeography can help people to navigate this novel terrain. ©



That



BY CHUCK WELCH

Network Values

Some networks represent a business work ethic, a professional hierarchy, the old order; but there are mail-art and telecommunication-art networks playing with a different set of networking values. Today, network art calls artists to a larger sense of purpose, interrelatedness, and cooperation. It involves a shift from patriarchal, hierarchical, anthropocentric thinking to a worldview vision; a metanoia.

Cross-cultural networking is a radical act of gift-sharing, collaborative play, dialogue, interconnection and accessibility. Most of these networker values are central to the volatile 1960s and 1970s culture — a time when definitions of social, cultural, religious, and economic values exploded. Art and communication were being stripped of elitism, reevaluated and made accessible in street art and happenings. Buckminster Fuller predicted a networking spaceship Earth; mass-media expert Marshall McLuhan envisioned an age when information would be recycled from one medium to another.

Network art objectives of the 1970s were to bring art into everyone's home as well as to the street, and to expand the nature of the communication process itself. These objectives have been central to mail and telecommunications art. Telecommunication artists, for example, use personal computers to download work for modification, detournement, or appropriation into other artworks; creative authorship is shared. Mail artists also share authorship in postal exchanges. The recycled surfaces or contents of

mailing tubes, envelopes, and parcels travel thousands of miles around the world as many artists alter them. Gradually, a global collage of artist postage stamps, rubber-stamped images, cryptic messages, and slogans emerges.

Creative communication of concepts, visual symbols, signs, and languages has become a prime influence in the way networkers use media like papermaking, painting, audio, video, computers, books, electrostatic copy art (Xerox), stamp art, zines, and performance art. Products, however, are not always the networker's most important object or objective. When an art form networks, artists are the medium and the message. Swiss mail-art networker H. R. Fricker has said, "Mail art is not Fine Art. It is the artist who is fine!"

Public Netlinks

Mail-art shows have remained an open public gate to all individuals, artists or non-artists. The proliferation of these egalitarian shows has given shape and form to art-that-networks in the 1990s.

Customary parameters for organizing public mail-art exhibitions are simple and few: 1) anybody can organize a mail art exhibition; 2) show

themes are chosen and advertised in art publications or public spaces; 3) all work entered is exhibited; 4) no entrance fees are charged; 5) no work is returned to participants; 6) mail-art show sponsors reciprocate with free catalogues, including show documentation and addresses of participants. Mail-art shows sometimes host "mail-art openings" where all exhibited mail is experienced by the public on "opening night." Here the public is allowed to walk home from public institutions with mail art in their hands. What forms of interaction are taking place between mail and telecom artists? Such a convergence makes sense, but how can it be done?

An Invitation to Telenetlink

Since the early 1970s mail artists have met to discuss intermedia communication. They have also established public forums for the discussion of netlinking alternative art forms. In 1985, H. R. Fricker dubbed mail-artist sojourns and meetings "tourism," and the tag has stuck.

In collaboration with fellow Swiss networker Gunther Ruch, Fricker popularized tourism by inviting mail artists to cash in their stamps for airline tickets and proposing decen-

We covered postcard art and virtual communities in the same issue (WER #57), years ago. Putting the global mail-art and telecommunication networkers together is a natural. Here's someone who is doing it.

Chuck Welch, aka Crackerjack Kid, is a networker and mail artist. In 1985 he wrote Networking Currents, about mail artists as networkers. He is editing a networker anthology, Eternal Network, forthcoming from University of Calgary Press. —Howard Rheingold



tralized mail-art congresses to discuss issues and concerns. In 1986, over 800 mail artists from 25 countries met in 80 mail-art congresses.

Today, Fricker is collaborating with netlink facilitators John Held Jr., Crackerjack Kid (the author), Mark Corroto (a.k.a. FaGaGaGa), Steve Perkins, Lloyd Dunn, Clemente Padin, and Peter Kaufmann to encourage the decentralization of art by interconnections with intermedia artists, home tapers, fax artists, bands, bulletin board users, and hackers, in a "Decentralized Worldwide Networker Congress 1992" (hereafter called NC92). In collaboration with the mail and telematic (online) communities, readers may find netlink keys to open interconnection through local/global projects.

As an NC92 facilitator, I have formed a "Telenetlink Congress" whose purpose is to reach readers and the telematic community through magazines and bulletin-board services, and by accessing internationally distributed USENET newsgroups such as [alt.artcom] and [rec.arts.fine]. I view these collective efforts as a ubiquitous "congress-in-process" extending throughout the 1992 Networker Congress year.

Participation may involve any form of telecommunication exchange: email, fax, video phones, etc.

Participation in NC92 begins when readers send one-page statements about "how you envision your own role as a networker." Proposals and projects that would interconnect the mail-art and telematic communities are also welcome. Periodic updates concerning telenetlink project initiatives will be posted over [rec.arts.fine] and [alt.artcom].

Send your NC92 statements and project proposals via email to Cathryn.L.Welch@dartmouth.edu or fax to Chuck Welch, Telenetlink Congress: 603/448-9998. All statements received from artists in the online community will become part of the NC92 Networker Database Congress, a collection that will be made available for research at the University of Iowa's Alternative Traditions in the Contemporary Arts Archive.

The Telenetlink Congress represents art that networks. By cutting through social, cultural and political hierarchies, we can dissolve boundaries and discover corresponding worlds of mail and telecommunications art. ❖

ACCESS

For further information about scheduled NC92 events, write to these facilitators:

- NC92 Office
— Hans Ruedi Fricker, Postfach 78, 9043 Trogen, Switzerland.
- Netlink North America
— John Held Jr., 7919 Goforth, Dallas, TX 75238, USA.
- NC92 Databank
— Crackerjack Kid, P. O. Box 978, Hanover, NH 03755, USA.
- Netlink Latin America
— Clemente Padin, Casilla C. Central 1211, Montevideo, Uruguay.
- Netlink Australia
— Warren Burt, Flat 10/102 Park St., St. Kilda West, Vic 3182, Australia.
- Netlink Asia
— Shozo Shimamoto, 1-1-10 Koshienguchi, Nishinomiya 663, Japan.
- Netlink Africa
— Ayah Okwabi, P. O. Box 6055, Accra North, Ghana.
- Netlink Russia
— Serge Segay and Rea Nikonova, Sverdlova 175, 35660 Eysk, Russia.
- The Face of the Congress
— Mark Corroto, P. O. Box 1382, Youngstown, OH 44501, USA.
- Netlink Iowa City
— Steve Perkins, 221 W. Benton Street, Iowa City, IA 55246, USA.
- Netlink Europa
— Congress Coordinator Peter W. Kaufmann, Bergwisenstrasse 11, 8123 Ebmatingen, Switzerland.

Other resources:

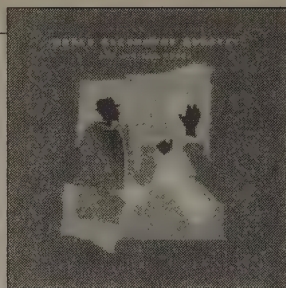
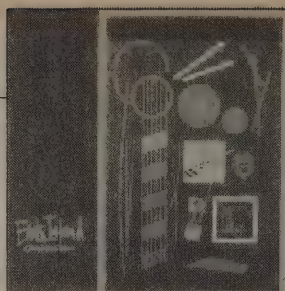
"Chronology of the World Wide Networker Congress 1992" by Peter W. Kaufmann, Bergwisenstrasse 11, 8123 Ebmatingen, Switzerland.

"Networker Congress: An Annotated Bibliography" by John Held Jr., \$10 on disk/\$15 hard copy, from 7919 Goforth, Dallas, TX 75238.

"Retrofuturism" (Quarterly) by the Tape Beatles, August 1991, #15. \$5 ea. P. O. Box 227, Iowa City, IA 52244.

WHAT? MUSIC!

BY JONATHAN E.



FUSION CONFUSION

Cross-fertilization of musical styles is reaching a feverish pitch. Traditional ethnic and folk forms mutate into local pop, local pop assimilates Western/Northern pop trends, hip-hop and dance music borrow ever more explicitly from Jamaican antecedents, jazz ("the black classical music of America") and neoclassical musicians collaborate with African composers, the transatlantic trade is ceaseless. As far as progressive musicians are concerned, the global village is in full effect — not even the museum relics of the past or of far away remain in place; many have been jackdowed out of their cases and into the modern world of samples or delivered onto disk.

Opinions about these musical meetings vary widely. Some critics complain from a "politically correct" theoretical viewpoint of cultural dilution and imperialism. Others complain from a more practical stance of musical weakness and dilettantism. Often, however, these complaints seem to be based on a philosophical objection to musical miscegenation. Then there are those (such as myself) who applaud all such musical communication in theory, but reserve judgment on a project-by-project basis.

Earth Island Orchestra's debut release (\$10 postpaid from I Wanna Records, P. O. Box 166, Wright Brothers Station, Dayton, OH 45409) displays the miscegenous philosophy of world beat better than any other band I can think of. The mix is Arabic and Latin with a couple of more Detroit-identified styles: a dose of rock'n'roll — they do

a great version of "Wild Thing" — and a dash of funk. It seems almost too audacious a concept to work, and at first I was a little taken aback by the weirdness of the juxtapositions. But it's all handled in a confident manner, it's energetic, the different styles (eventually) happily coexist, and there's a touch of humour to it. If all musical fusions had been this successful, the word "fusion" wouldn't have its negative connotations.

At the less beat-oriented end of the spectrum, **Kronos Quartet's** *Pieces of Africa* (Elektra Nonesuch) features the string quartet playing pieces composed by seven African composers, including Zimbabwean **Dumisani Maraire**, Gambian **Foday Musa Suso**, Sudanese **Hamza El Din**, and Ghanaian **Obo Addy**. These composers and Moroccan **Hassan Hakmoun** also play on their respective pieces. The recording has moments of beauty, is varied and distinctive, but some of it seems to be two styles side by side rather than truly integrated. *Tchokola* (Epic) by **Jean Luc Ponty**, on the other hand, integrates his jazz violin into many African styles with great success. All parts breathe equally and highlight each other's strengths. On *Metamorphosis* (Elektra Nonesuch) by **World Saxophone Quartet and African Drums**, the drumming is a little overshadowed by the honk and squeal of the saxophones, but about holds its own. The intensity of the Quartet's playing and their intellectual rigour make this worth listening to.

Ritual Beating System (Axiom), by **Bahia Black**, is **Bill Laswell** drawing the connections between African, Brazilian and jazz styles.

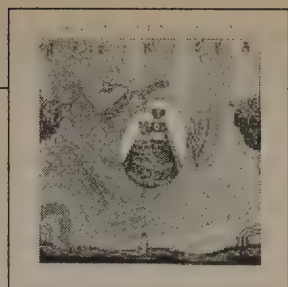
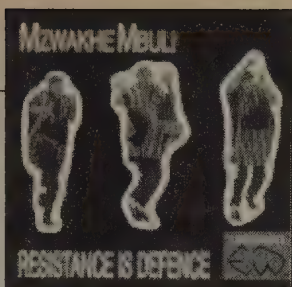
Massed drums anchor funk-jazz soloists and Portuguese rappers for an unusual effect. *A World Out of Time* (Shanachie) is guitarists **Henry Kaiser** and **David Lindley** on a busman's holiday in Madagascar, recording with what seems like every musician on the island. The styles blend almost seamlessly and it's widely varied. *Plains Music* (Rhythm Safari) by **Manfred Mann's Plain Music** crosses melodies and beats from North American plains tribes with a jazzy South African feel, resulting in beautiful and evocative music.

HUNGARIAN

Apocrypha (Rykodisc), from **Márta Sebestyén**, is another beautiful piece of music-making. Although the songs are based on folk tunes, purists beware: the texture is heavily electronic, with shimmering sheets of sound. However, Márta's clear and controlled voice is utterly human, although intriguingly foreign. Compiled from three of her Hungarian albums, *Apocrypha* has an underlying feeling of sadness, but somehow the result is not one of woe and misery, but rather a state of quiet hope and determination for a better future.

AFRICAN AFFLATUS

Abdel Gadir Salim All-Stars have a gorgeous release with *The Merdoum Kings Play Songs Of Love* (Shanachie). Oud, strings, hand percussion, and saxophone combine under Salim's husky vocals to produce a mellifluous and moving music, delicate and sinewy by turn, that will take you to the warm desert night. Sudanese music seems to operate in a suspended universe



of translucent beauty that is a stark contrast to Sudan's everyday life of strict Islamic law and ongoing civil war.

Mzwakhe Mbuli explicitly demands a better future for his fellow South African countrymen. *Resistance Is Defence* (EarthWorks) has elements of the musical styles that have become familiar from South Africa over the past few years, but he has freshened them up with a sparkling personal vision that amplifies their power. With lyrics in Zulu, Venda, Xhosa, and English — and printed with explanations of their political context — the message of continuing resistance to injustice is made abundantly clear. The recent vote in South Africa may have moved the country a step closer to becoming Azania, but a look in our own back yard shows that the mere absence of apartheid laws is no guarantee of justice for all. The struggle continues.

AMERICAN

D'Cückoo's long-awaited CD (WER #71, p.107) is now available (\$15 postpaid from D'Cückoo International, 6114 LaSalle Avenue/Suite 414, Oakland, CA 94611). It's an adventurous foray into variously influenced out-there sounds, including light and airy marimbas, the famous Taiko-inspired turtle drums, and a funky bass. I can't honestly say I like every track: some of the vocals are stretched beyond their abilities, some of the rhythms are herky-jerky rather than grooving, and occasionally there's an orchestral, pomp-rock style that I'm allergic to. However, when they're good, they're very good, and these relatively minor quibbles don't account for much of the CD's time. D'Cückoo's method

of music-making is easily among the most original and wide-ranging anywhere in the world. Considering the awesome technical imagination displayed, it's not surprising that some parts work better than others.

CARIBBEAN JAMMING

Rara Machine's *Break The Chain* (Shanachie) jumps with energy. Call-and-response vocals over percolating rhythms, both programmed and acoustic, some stinging guitar and a driving bass, plus synthesizer and whistles; this sums up the sound but does not encompass it. Nothing could — this band is determined to resurrect the older Haitian rara style with centrifugal vigour. By adding elements from other Caribbean and African styles and including a little rap, it takes Haitian music to new heights.

REGGAE REPORT

Jah Lewis is a new name in the reggae field. *All Gone Astray* (Shanachie) showcases brilliant songwriting that harkens back to pre-dancehall times, when songs were songs. Culturally aware and conscious, his lyrics deal with Rastafarianism, biblical themes and have a reasoned and positive approach to the world. One song, "Race Of Life," deserves to be a classic of any genre. Vocally adept, his energy is righteously strengthened by a vigorous sound that blasts the stereotype of laidback reggae right out of the arena without use of electronically brutal sound. If you're looking for just one contemporary reggae album, check Jah Lewis out.

Once upon a time — about 1985 — that electronic approach to Jamaican

music-making was fresh and exciting. **King Jammy** was the man who produced many of the early digital hits. His vocalists, singers like **Wayne Smith**, **Tenor Saw**, and **Nitty Gritty** to name the first three on *A Man & His Music, Volume 2 — Computer Style* (RAS), had a wistfulness and delicacy that has been almost entirely submerged in the ongoing dominance of dancehall shouting and raucousness. The collection is a poignant reminder of how styles can go astray and go sour; it's also a valuable illustration of the pivotal role played by a producer in the selection of material. RAS has released two other collections of King Jammy's music. *Volume 1 — Roots & Harmony Style* demonstrates his earlier background with sweeter sounds (some updated with an electronic thwack), while *Volume 3 — Hits Style* covers his entire career with plenty of great vocalists in a plethora of reggae styles. All in all, these three releases are a fascinating retrospective of a producer who has not received his full due of critical respect.

Augustus Pablo, on the other hand, has been lauded over and over — for good reason. However, much of his work has been buried in the vaults. *Pablo Meets Mr. Bassie — Original Rockers Volume 2* (Shanachie) partially remedies the situation. His mesmerizing deep-dub sound is timeless — despite the changing times. ☺

All releases, except *Earth Island Orchestra* and *D'Cückoo*, are available on CD for \$18 each or cassette for \$11 each (postpaid) from Round World Music, 491A Guerrero, San Francisco, CA 94110; 415/255-8411.

Twisted Sisters

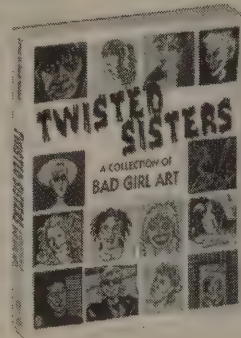
They're bad, they're mad and they aren't going to be quiet about it. This collection of work by fourteen women cartoonists exposes the darkly humorous (may I say hysterical?) side of the feminine psyche, crude and rude as Wonder Woman never was. —Kathleen O'Neill

Twisted Sisters
 (A Collection of Bad Girl Art)
 Diane Noomin, Editor.
 1991; 256 pp.

\$14.95 (\$16.95 postpaid)
 from Penguin USA/Cash Sales,
 120 Woodbine Street, Bergen-
 field, NJ 07621; 800/253-6476
 (or Whole Earth Access)



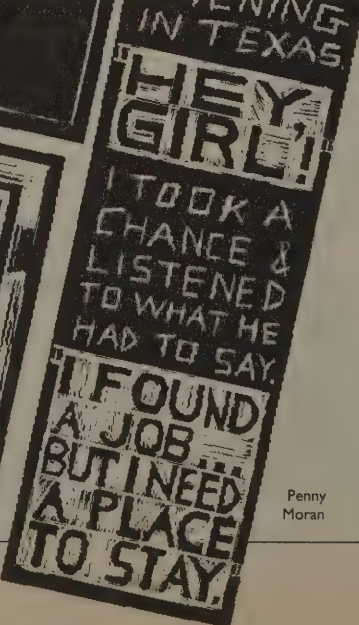
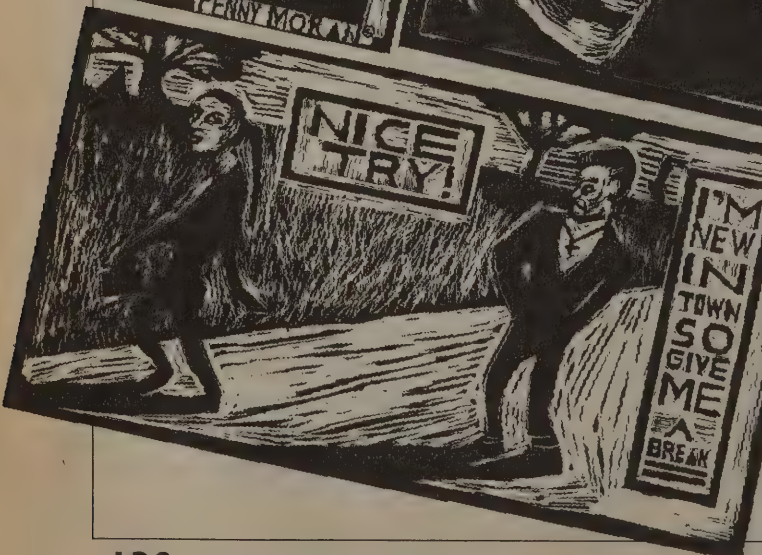
Fift Glickman



M. K. Brown



PENNY MORAN



Penny Moran

BACKSCATTER

Echoes from readers back to *Whole Earth Review* (27 Gate Five Road, Sausalito, California 94965).

We pay \$15 for every letter we publish.

Red ink

I received overwhelmingly positive response to the Summer '91 article on menstruation, "The Sabbath of Women" — I had just one negative response (see below) out of a veritable sackful of mail. Both myself and the folks at *Whole Earth* were thrilled by the enthusiastic nature of the letters, and by the fact that this article generated more response — via mail, email, phone and personal communication — than anything *WER* has published in years. Taking into account the extraordinary nature of *WER* readers, I had expected to stimulate more controversy — but it seems that we are collectively ready to drop our repulsion and avoidance of menstruation, and that there is a good deal of excitement about the rediscovery of women's wisdom. As a result of the article, I've been contacted by many women hungry for more dialogue and research on

this topic, as well as by several women who are working and thinking in similar ways to me, including Beth Richards, a Canadian filmmaker with whom I am now working on a documentary film about menstruation, entitled *Blood of the Moon*.

—Lara Owen

The following letter was a painful reminder of the tragedies in many women's lives wrought by modern contraception.

IN YOUR ARTICLE "The Sabbath of Women" you stated, "The value we place on menstruation has a direct correlation with the value we place on ourselves as women." You are writing from the point of view of a woman who menstruates. I have not menstruated since I was 22 (I am now 40) due to a hysterectomy (life-saving) from a Dalkon Shield. I was also exposed to DES in my mother's womb and know of many women whose surgeries at an early age have caused a loss of womb and menstruation. Do we women have less value? I do not believe that bleeding nor the ability to bear children have any reflection on our value as women. In fact, after my trauma in my early twenties, the hardest thing to come to terms with was society's definition of "woman" and it took much healing to feel a sense of my woman-ness again.

Please don't perpetuate that sick view and change that sentence if you publish in a book. I think that what you were saying is woman's blood is sacred. Women whose wombs were lost to corporate greed (or any other way) are sacred also. Nor have we lost our "moontimes" (cycles) or powers at that time.

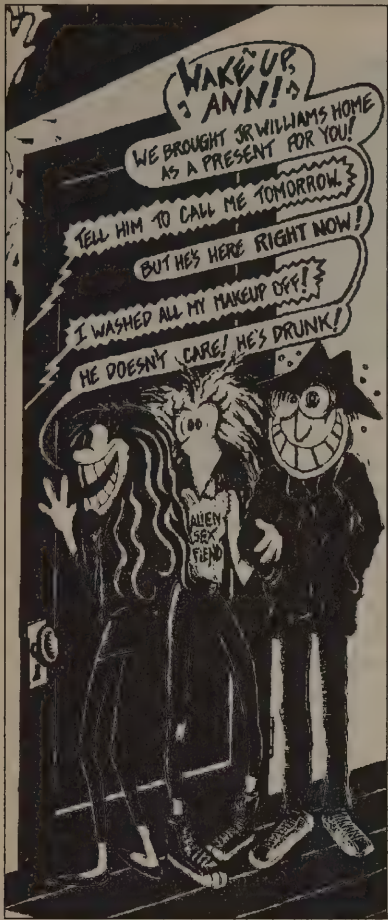
Marcia Wallgren
Yellow Springs, Ohio

If we really valued menstruation, the womb, and the processes of being female, then we would be less likely, as a society, to permit the use of poorly tested devices such as Dalkon shields, and other forms of contraception.

—LO

WE ARE READING your article in *WER* and enjoying it, especially the hooray! for the wild and raw inconvenience that will be difficult (hopefully impossible) to civilize. My wife and I are determined to allow the reality of moontime into our family. We have five daughters (and some sons) so we have plenty of paint and canvas to work with.

About two years ago, Heartsong and I began to establish a moontime practice of relieving her from most domestic chores, mostly from food preparation.



Krystine Kryttre



Julie Doucet

This brought moontime into the working realities of everyone else in the family by requiring some mutual responsibilities that our young ones enjoy. The "inconvenience" requires adjustments which are beautiful openings for teaching and discussion.

We are also working to deepen our understanding of the creative and visionary potentials inherent in the liquid flow of the ground of fertility. The honoring of moontime has become a large and growing theme in our lives. Your work is wonderful.

Steve Deese and Debbi Heartsong
Springfield, Oregon

LARA OWEN'S DISCUSSION of the conceptualization of menstruation in various cultures struck a chord with me. For quite some time it has seemed criminal to me that menstruation has been distorted and viewed with disgust, when in fact it is the completely natural and healthy process of women's bodies. How can a culture perpetuate the notion that half its members have an unspeakable dirty flaw?

It's high time to rethink menstruation, and certainly time for women to have all the options available in how they experience their fertility/menstrual cycle, both emotionally and physically. Women have a variety of reactions to the bleeding phase of their cycle: some women welcome and celebrate it, for some bleeding is a painful and/or inconvenient time. Responses and methods of catching or not catching the flow vary from woman to woman, and even a particular woman may have a different reaction or different needs from one cycle to the next. The choice I am most comfortable with for myself is the use of natural sea sponges worn as an internal absorbing device.

Sponges typically last me many months (I've used my current one for over a year!), cost only couple of dollars, and are very easy to use and take care of. They are available by mail, with instructions, from The Rubber Tree, 4426 Burke Ave. N., Seattle, WA 98103. Reusable flannel and muslin menstrual pads are also available. (The Rubber Tree is a nonprofit service that also sells condoms and low-cost spermicides.)

Hopefully, with a proliferation of articles like Ms. Owen's, and books like those she cites, both men and women will question and rethink the old beliefs they hold about menstruation, and construct a



Leslie Sternbergh/Joyce Brabner

view which values it as a healthy, normal and very special part of a woman's life.

Nancy Skinner
Seattle, Washington

The reason that I didn't recommend the use of sponges in my article was that there is a possibility of infection if the sponge is not properly cleaned. If you decide to try them (and many women find them perfectly satisfactory), buy a sponge designed to be used as a menstrual sponge. Rinse the sponge thoroughly to remove any sand and then boil for at least five minutes. During the period the sponge can be simply rinsed clean and reinserted. Although you can use them for more than one period (cleaning and air-drying before storage), for absolute caution, use a new one each month. —LO

I NEVER REALIZED until last night when I read your article that I was ashamed of the blood itself! What has our society done to us? The very fluid that makes our lives possible is treated as something

to be hidden, not seen, but something to be dealt with, caught by synthetic padding and thrown into the trash, treated as a waste product.

It was a liberating experience for me. I thought about it all night. I thought about all of the women that spoke about it as the "curse," my friends who had a visit from "Cousin George," the times I told others I was "under the weather." Why is the very word "menstruation" taboo?

This morning I ordered some cloth pads. I look forward to my next period as a time of renewal and hope. As my first child grows before my eyes, one part of me wants another baby to cherish and hold, while another part of me wants to keep my moontime for a little while longer. I feel like I've just become a woman, just started to celebrate my fertility, my importance in life. And thus begins my empowerment, my journey as a woman begins.

Wanda B. LaGrave
Irving, Texas

QUOTIDIAN BACKSCATTER

Jacques Ellul

I was disappointed that your issue "Questioning Technology" (#72) overlooked Jacques Ellul's latest book on technique, *The Technological Bluff*, which recently appeared in translation. Ellul is a French author who has made a sustained criticism of technological thinking and technological civilization since the mid-'50s, long before it was *de rigeur*. It was his book, *The Technological Society*, published in the U.S. in the early '60s, that introduced many of the criticisms of technique (e.g., "autonomous technology") that informed the counter-cultural and ecological movements.

The Technological Bluff is Ellul's third book devoted to technique and technician-

society, and it is no simple re-hash of the other two. In brief, his major theme is that discourse on technique and technology is largely bluff. The stakes are enormous — the environment, the future, the economy, security — and yet technological progress is always a gamble, because we never know all of its consequences until they are irreversibly present. And once they are known — pollution, psychological destruction, unemployment, nuclear danger — we must gamble again to deal with those consequences — and so on, forever. He recognizes what so many people ignore or forget: technological "progress" in one area all but forces it in other areas. We think we have the power to choose and that technology enhances our set of choices. In

practice, we are forced along a very narrow path by sets of circumstances that were the results of prior choices, but which we could not foresee.

Ellul is always criticized, and usually dismissed, for being a pessimist. Political radicals are put off by his Christianity. But his statement of the scope of the problem is unassailable. The only meaningful choice we have now is to start saying "no," firmly and clearly. Technological development is a vicious circle with no end. The benefits diminish as the system utilizes techniques to the maximum, a phenomenon Ellul calls "reversal," in which the negative effects of a technique eventually outweigh the positive ones. Human control of technology, which everyone hopes for, has to include the possibility, even as a normal state of affairs, of saying "no."

Saying "no" does not mean rejection of all technique; it means setting limits and accepting existing levels of technology. It means not counting on the bluff as a "way out" of a technical blunder. It means finding the consciousness and will to reject our fascination with technology, which results in a proliferation of useless (or unnecessary) gadgets, toys, and sheer waste. In short, it's a thoroughly commendable approach to the problem. Read *The Technological Bluff*.

I would also like to add that I appreciated Ivan Illich's and Elin Whitney-Smith's articles very much.

Philip Pitha
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Rover, Part V: the howling

I don't know if you are all friends or what, but I don't know any of you except through years of reading the several incarnations of your magazine. I was disturbed to read that (editor?) James Donnelly tampered with Kathleen Creighton's article "Renting With Rover" without her consent. I was outraged to read Mr. Donnelly's arrogant reply. Donnelly's reply is neither the apology nor the retraction that the writer requests and deserves. His objectionable tampering with the article's intent remains unjustified and his actions damage the credibility of *Whole Earth Review* and demonstrate a lack of editorial responsibility.

I'd like to see you give Ms. Creighton space to explain the prejudices against large dogs and why a supposedly respon-

sible (editor?) would feel the need to assert that this prejudice is justified. James Donnelly owes us all, writer and readers, a serious apology.

aebele@ucdavis.edu
Davis, California

I am responsible for the Big Dog mistake. I apologize. And we all promise to pay more attention. —Howard Rheingold

This seems a good opportunity for me to apologize, too — at least for my profoundly snotty response to Kathleen Creighton's letter of remonstrance. I've been evicted from several places due to neighbors' complaints about the awful behavior and distressing evidence of my big dog. And I don't even have no dog. —James Donnelly

Technology as a symptom of evolution

The current issue on technology was something that has been a long time coming. As a person who has been deeply involved with technology (computer software) this issue has been an ongoing dialog. For me, the fundamental issue is: Is the "medium the message" or not? Put another way: is there any hope that through technology we will be able to extricate ourselves from our predicament or is our predicament a side effect of technology itself? Or . . . are the effects that we observe (pollution, overpopulation, environmental destruction, war, famine, etc.) a result of our motivation, our lack of consciousness or even our viewpoint?

Throughout the years of this dialog an alchemical koan has been echoing through my mind: "The sword that kills the man is the sword that saves the man."

One thing seems obvious to me, and that is that this road of technology is one which we as the dom species entered a very long time ago, probably the first time we used a stick to plow the earth and plant seeds. Considering the length of time we have been on this road, I doubt whether we have any way back to some sort of pre-technological existence short of destroying the vast majority of human life through some catastrophe. And that is a distinct possibility. So given this existential predicament, how do we transform this sword that is causing so much destruction, into something which can heal and return the earth to a balanced natural state?

One problem which seems apparent to

me is that we think of technology as something which is not natural. Perhaps this is because we see ourselves as something which is apart from nature. If Man (and woman) are a product of nature, how can anything that is produced by man not be a product of nature?

Another important piece is the biblical story of the fall of man. In that story, after eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve immediately notice that they are naked. This represents an evolutionary transition, the birth of the rational mind which makes distinctions, between good and evil, dark and light, self and other. Perhaps this was the starting point on our technological journey. In light of the alchemical koan, maybe the rational mind is the sword that is killing man . . . and the sword that will save man. (Swords in the language of tarot symbology represent air, rational, discursive thought.)

It seems to me that the transformation of this sword, from something detrimental to something beneficial, is something which is going to require a major revolution of mind . . . or evolution. If it's true that evolution occurs in quantum-like jumps, in response to significantly altered external conditions, could it be that the significantly altered external conditions are the ones that we are beginning to experience now? And that it is the mind itself operating in this divided state that is creating the very conditions that will make that state of mind obsolete?

Is the essential question what we will do with technology or is it what we will do with mind? And how we will re-integrate that mind back with its source in nature, consciously?

Thanks for raising the issue.

Ed Fladung
Fox Point, Wisconsin

Orwell, Pandora, and soda pop

There was in [WER #74] an article outlining some of the wonderful benefits of a new technological miracle known variously as Virtual Reality, Head-Mounted Display, and 3D Goggles. From the tone of his article one would think that there was nothing adverse to this device which Robinett claims would extend the perceptions of the humans wearing them. I would argue that not only does this machine not extend perceptions but further

tunnels them, enveloping the user in a sensory deprived fantasy. What the world needs now is not fancy electronic toys but a concentrated effort at perceiving the existing world and the wisdom gained thereof for the difficult decision making required to steer a hyper-complex society through the consequences of its mindless desires. Certainly the Soviet Union has recently realized the cost of technological advancement beyond its ability to control or pay for it. I believe that American society will undoubtedly follow, once the riches of its integral resources have played out or the insanity which its decisions entail overwhelm its ability to function. If this has not already occurred.

In his introduction to this new-fangled technology, Robinett details a few of its benefits, particularly its medical applications. The medical benefits are always titillating for these costly mechanisms. Seeing with x ray vision and all, just like in the science-fiction books. And giving the deaf hearing certainly is a compassionate gain. We'll be able to see new diseases and save our skins from sunburn with all kinds of warning systems apparently to be integrated into our newfound sight. It's as though these goggles will surround our bodies with a wonderful skin of security from that nasty natural world we unfortunately still inhabit. But I'm afraid Robinett's descriptions are merely titillating where the real problems we face in the future will have nothing to do with medicine. We obviously have plenty of people surviving all kinds of disease and hasn't he heard of overpopulation? You see, coming up with superfluous hardware for illusory problems is obviously what we're good at. We've swamped our budgets with every conceivable medical gadget we could invent and yet our health care system trails behind that of every other industrialized nation. We can invent new technologies at breakneck speed but without any contemplation of their ultimate consequences. Robinett dangles the blessings of this new gadget before our eyes like any beady eyed conman would, enticing us with its utopian benefits in the benign vacuum of his video game world.

What sound like benefits are actually the last bindings of a technological straight jacket where technological dilemmas beg only for technological solutions. Seeing radiation sounds beneficial and practical until we remember that deadly radiation is only a byproduct of the seemingly end-

less generation of electrically based technologies. This entropic spiral is only amplified by such toys as these 3D goggles which appear to require less energy but which actually induce geometric escalations in energy and resource consumption through their efficiency. Technology begets only technology and environments non-conducive to human life. Look around you! We are enveloped in an environment not only sustaining but favoring technological sustenance. We have indiscriminately sacrificed our souls to its "manifest destiny."

The true purpose lurking behind Robinett's proposals for Virtual Reality are those that technologies, especially high priced technologies, have always been used for: the acquisition, control, and protection of money. Money funds only those projects which will return on its investment. Do we see community groups gathering to acquire these devices to enhance communication or interpersonal relations? They're ridiculously costly for our already deeply in debt society and their implementation obviously would not benefit the populace as a whole. Even Robinett's proposals easily lead to Orwellian scenarios. Bio-engineering, secret messages for those with programmed access, graphic database overlays, the ability to see in alternative light spectrums, all become horrific tools in the hands of the powerful, not to mention the police and military protecting their assets. These abilities are already being harnessed by those in control. And gee, "remote presence" grants the powerful omnipresence as well! Why should an executive's presence be enhanced, even if "she" is a woman? What's to keep an absolutely fascistic police state from abusing "remote presence"? In fact, who else would use such a bizarre invention? Who benefits from the technology

Robinett? Have you ever wondered?

Robinett would also have us believe that our perception needs enhancement — that we are effectively blind without virtual reality. Why, the spectrum is so much larger than the area of visible light! Science's mythology always has a way of convincing us how much we need it and its products to survive, to better our existences, all the while ignoring its absolute failure. Rheingold in his introduction also praises the virtues of perceptual extension, i.e. the microscope = antibiotics, the telescope = a new cosmology.

Perception itself is not so easily defined my friends and not so easily expanded upon. Knowledge is not as quantifiable as you would believe with your computational intelligence. Our toys gain us nothing but the wasting away of precious time. Time which should be used to find real solutions to our problems. We remain mired in our own diversions happy to let technology itself control our destinies. We're so effectively entertained that we have no idea what we have lost in terms of human culture and wisdom. We have lost the very ground that we stand on. No, the enhancement proposed through your electronic miracle will only convince those sorry souls whose vision and perceptions have already been tunneled and effectively nullified by the technology itself. And we will live with the legacy of having empowered the rich and corrupt to further exploit the earth and its people.

Let me ask you some simple questions. Is the world truly "better off" with these new perceptions or are these simply diversions from the real problems at hand for our species? Are we only reemphasizing the same old formulations of resource exploitation with our new inventions? Remember that with each tech-

03-24-92

IF GOD DOES INDEED TURN OUT TO BE
GODDESS, IT BECOMES MUCH MORE DIFFI-
CULT TO EXPLAIN WHY SHE CREATED THOSE
(BLEAH!) MEN.

ROGER BLACKMAR
PO Box 425642
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
94142

nological enhancement of our capabilities we have opened Pandora's Box after Pandora's Box until control itself has escaped us. Who will truly benefit from the super-human capabilities you describe (and don't try to tell me "the people"!)? Who will pay for these extraneous abilities to journey into macro and micro worlds? What is the true cost of any new technology and has the cost of such ever been offset by its benefits? With all of the "advancement" that we've currently achieved it seems that even the most educated are still blind to the simple facts of existence, while around us our exploits leave trails of toxicity to haunt future generations for millenniums. We are still driven by very primitive fears and by this we are proven incompetent to handle the fire of our own creation. We are ultimately a sad species to allow such frivolous pursuits to divert our attention at so crucial a moment in our earthly development. We may very well inherit a burned planet on which to play games with our soda pop visions.

LVNGLYCHNTNGDWNBBYLN
Dain Olsen
Altadena, California

The Fourth World

Kyoto Journal is a quarterly magazine in English on Japanese culture based in Kyoto, Japan. We've been publishing for the last five years, but have recently decided to widen our perspectives to include our Asian neighbors.

One idea we feel highly worthwhile is to focus our efforts on "the fourth world" in Asia. We envision an entire edition (fall 92?) devoted to up-to-date accounts of how the indigenous cultures of Asia are faring in the face of capitalistic and technological civilization. Where do they stand now and what are their prospects for the rest of the 90s and the next century?

Since we are Japan-based, we are particularly interested in exploring how Japanese resort development, golf courses, tourism, ODA (Official Development Assistance from the Japanese government) and Japanese corporate ventures are affecting native cultures in China, Taiwan, S.E. Asia, Indonesia, and Micronesia (not forgetting Japan's Ainu).

We are asking your kind assistance in helping us network with writers/activists/native peoples who might be willing to be involved with this project. You may know

of material already in existence that may be appropriate to our endeavor, including recent books which might be reviewed or listed in a relevant bibliography. But we are especially looking for pieces that are as current as possible, have lengthy quotes or interviews with native sources, and contain brief histories of native interaction with colonialism, imperialism and present-day technological civilization, especially Japan. Appropriate visual material is also requested.

In addition, our designer is interested in creating a separate, wall-size map of native Asia, erasing the artificial boundaries created in the last century and a half and mapping what Asia would be like if the integrity of native lands were respected. Any information on the extent of traditional tribal lands would be more than greatly appreciated!

John Einarsen, Editor
Kyoto Journal

Kampo Kaikan, 35 Minamigoshu-machi,
Okazaki, Sakyo-ku, Kyoto 606 Japan
Phone (075) 771-6111
Fax (075) 751-1196

BACK ISSUES

"NEWS THAT STAYS NEWS" is how we like to think of what we publish. Many of our old issues are remarkably timely since we often cover topics several years before other publications do, and because our old interests keep resurfacing as news. Some recent issues are described below. Write us for a complete listing.

74. Spring 1992 — The Goddess Is Alive: women's wisdom from Z. Budapest and Paula Gunn Allen; reviews of pagan zines; fighting for the forests, including reflections of an outlaw volunteer, negotiating tactics, tools and resources for forest activists; robot Olympics; Brian Eno on world music; the coevolution of governance; reviews of maps and atlases. \$7.

73. Winter 1991 — Questioning technology: Jerry Mander, Langdon Winner, Howard Levine, Peter Calthorpe, J. Baldwin, Ivan Illich, Amory and Hunter Lovins, William Calvin, and others debate the merits, drawbacks, and outcomes of various technologies. \$7.

70. Spring 1991 — A nationwide information and communication network; access to political tools and to poetry; the Gesundheit Institute; do-it-yourself eclipse prediction, by William Calvin;

Cyberthon 1.0. Plus Wavy Gravy, Will Baker, Robert Bly, Gore Vidal. \$7.

69. Winter 1990 — Access to Japan, including: the origins of Japanese group-mindedness; Michael Phillips on US-Japan relations; Bruce Sterling on Japanese pop music; the role of whaling in Japanese culture; Japanese environmental groups. Plus Murray Bookchin and Dave Foreman. \$7.

65. Winter 1989 — The Global Teenager, a first-hand report from around the world; the rock'n'roll revolution in the Baltics; how to teach English in Japan; spontaneous healing and miracle cures; a free worldwide computer network. \$7.

62. Spring 1989 — Revival of the goddess; the flourishing of a cooperative movement in Mondragon, Spain; environmental idealism in Costa Rica; feminist journals; women and the martial arts. \$7.

61. Winter 1988 — Twentieth Anniversary issue: 85 one-page essays and interviews by old-timers and newcomers. Ed Abbey, Wendell Berry, Ken Kesey, Stephanie Mills, Ivan Illich, Lynn Margulis, R. Crumb. Michael Ventura on timelessness. \$7.

Hupdates & Corrections

• From *WER #74* (Spring 1992):
The complete ordering address for Wildland Firefighting (p. 7) is *Fire Publications, 9072 Artesia Boulevard/Suite 7, Bellflower, CA 90706.*

The photograph of Alice Kelly on p. 52 was taken by Jeannette Hope.

The correct number for ordering The Soul of Economics (p. 92) is 800/487-4332.

• From *WER #73* (Winter 1991):
The reference to "Prince Edward Island in Alaska" on p. 14 in "In The Absence of the Sacred" was supposed to be to "Prince William Sound in Alaska."

The new access information for Secrets of Warmth (p. 118) is: \$11.95 (\$13 postpaid) from *CloudCap, Box 27344, Seattle, WA 98125.*

The correct price for Underground Beat (p. 120) is \$15 for 4 issues.

• From *WER #72* (Fall 1991):
COPADEBA (p. 89) can no longer be reached at the published address. We have no new address.

• From *The Fringes of Reason*:
Fry's Modern Humans (p. 214) new address is *HC76, Box 2207, Garden Valley, ID 86322.*

PRICES

Plentiful issues (any not listed below):
\$7 postpaid.

Endangered issues (fewer than 30 in our archives): #4, 10, 13, 14, 49, 50, 58, 60, 68, 71. \$50.

Rare issues (fewer than ten in our archives): #1, 52, 57, 64. \$100.

Extinct issues (out of print; bound photocopies): #3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 28, 51, 53, 55. \$30.

Bound photocopies of *Endangered* and *Rare* issues are also available for \$30.

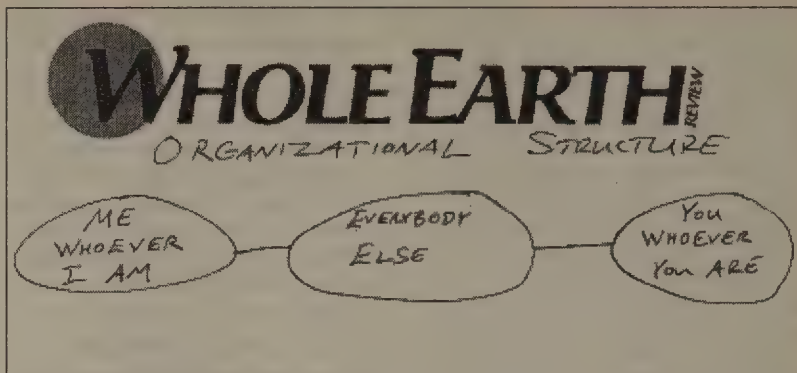
Issue 27 was *The Next Whole Earth Catalog*; it is not available as a back issue.

GOSSIP

THE GOOD SHIP *Whole Earth* is sailing into another dimension, as it is wont to do. Here's the story.

Two years ago, *WER* staff and the Point Foundation directors decided that we needed to do two things. First, we needed to prevent the whole ship from sinking. The entire enterprise grew out of a successful cultural experiment — the *Whole Earth Catalog* — that was also an enormous financial success. *CoEvolution Quarterly* was another successful cultural experiment, but not a lucrative one: the magazine managed to lose money year after year, yet continued to exist. If you don't take advertising and therefore don't have enough money to buy subscribers through direct-mail campaigns, you don't usually have much of a lifespan in the magazine business. *CQ* and its successor *WER* have been anomalies simply because they have continued to exist for so long.

Other cultural experiments — the *Catalogs*, the *Electronic Whole Earth Catalog*, the Hackers' Conference, the *Software Catalog* and *Software Review*, the



Our readers may wonder what *Whole Earth's* organization chart looks like: The ever-charming Jonathan Eveleigh has come up with a conceptual scheme, reproduced above, that is simple, elegant, and true. This is the *WER/Point* org chart. Note that readers are included.

WELL, *Cyberthon*, *Helping Nature Heal*, *The Fringes of Reason*, *Signal* — accomplished their cultural goals. Their financial destinies varied wildly. The *Software Review* went down and *Whole Earth Review* emerged. We continue to do books, but the era of the \$2 million advance that saves us in the nick of time is long past. The *WELL* is a healthy, growing business that will continue to invest in its own

growth for the foreseeable future.

Kelly Teevan became Executive Director of Point in 1990 and focused our attention on the business infrastructure that had grown around these cultural experiments. He made clear what many had suspected: the magazine is the heart of the enterprise, and it has survived through miracles that won't be repeated

REPORT TO THE READER

DAY ONE for me at *Whole Earth* (May 31, 1990): I learned that *Whole Earth* had \$20,000 in cash and not the \$60,000 I had believed. Day Two: I learned we lost money at an average of \$7,000 per month. I heard reports of a past "pay-less August" for the staff. Despite paltry pay levels, we seemed right on schedule for another tight summer. Welcome to *Whole Earth*!

Well, my job as the first executive director here was to take care of things, to make *Whole Earth* more businesslike while respecting its specialness. We got from that point to here, two years later, and we're stronger despite a tough economic climate. The *Whole Earth* ship sails on! But, I am sad to say, it will lack this particular passenger.

The shift in course currently contemplated at *Whole Earth* (see Gossip) tempts me to focus in this piece on the present situation. But this Report's purpose is to review the past year — pause and consider what, and how, we've done. Last year was a unique time in *Whole Earth's* wandering evolution.

In 1991, we spread our wings a bit. While

for-profit and nonprofit organizations — green, publishing and otherwise — were on the defensive, we went on the offensive, increasing our readership and our staffing budget. For our base, we had strength in *Whole Earth Review*, whose editorial content and production system were already in good nick. *WER* improved in content (thanks to Howard Rheingold and Richard Nilsen) and looks (thanks to Kathleen O'Neill). And our editorial/production process improved in many ways, with Jonathan Eveleigh, in the new role of managing editor, working to create and maintain an efficient schedule. But our real gains came in financial results and in our approach to business tasks and organizational issues.

Business, our Achilles' heel, offered the greatest opportunity for improvement. So we started there and found three excellent people — Nancy Bellaci, Linnea Johnson, and Tom White — to work full-time in positions that had previously been undervalued. Our customer service, office support, and circulation functions blossomed as a result (though we lost the delightful Susan Rosberg when she

moved to Savannah). Business Manager Keith Jordan, in a newly created position, deserves the credit for envisioning this new team and putting it into place. As a result, our sales volume went up, we cut our yearly losses, and we stopped living on future earnings.

Another opportunity was to organize ourselves. An organization has its own ecology for gathering, processing, and sharing information; for making decisions; for helping its people grow; for channeling diverse energies in a common direction. We had reviewed books about "how to do your own organization," but we hadn't taken their advice. Rather, people worked as individual artisans; a team approach was a new idea. Our organizational systems were embryonic.

So we introduced more consistent and broader internal communication. We began defining jobs, to make sure tasks were covered and responsibilities clear. Most notably, the staff developed a strategic vision for the future. Working with an enthusiastic team of alumni volunteers from Stanford Business School, with Dr. Richard Steckel, and

and policies that can't be continued, by not paying authors, artists, and staff adequately, and by mortgaging the future through quick-cash, long-term loans from our subscribers in the form of three-year advance subscriptions. Thanks to the financial archaeology undertaken by Kelly and Business Manager Keith Jordan, we now understand how the business has worked, how it ought to work better, and how we can stop losing money. We have the basis for growing a financially healthy enterprise at which people can afford to work. We have plans for increasing revenues. The ship is no longer sinking.

Kelly Teevan left Point in April; we thank him for being the latest in the string of

miracles that have kept us afloat.

The second thing we need to do, now that the ship is more reliably afloat, is to sail it into unknown waters again. To that end, Jon McIntire is coming aboard as Point Director. We're going to be doing new things because they are the right things to do and because we are the people best equipped to do them. In the next issue, Jon will speak for himself about his plans.

In the past twenty-five years, Jon has managed the Grateful Dead over three different time periods. For three years, he was a staff counselor for RAVEN (Rape and Violence End Now) in St. Louis. He has extensive experience in

the theater. He knows how loose confederations of quirky personalities can grow from shoestring operations to successful businesses without sacrificing their artistic integrity. He knows about organizations that are also dysfunctional families. And he's an optimist. Time will tell; fasten your seat belts.

Kevin Sanders of the War & Peace Foundation faxed Stewart Brand to ask if Jerry Brown got his "flat tax" idea from an old issue of *CQ* (Stewart published "A Simple Tax," by Robert Gnaizda, in *CoEvolution Quarterly* #38, Summer 1983). When Stewart made one of his rare, incandescent visits to the WER production office to show us the fax, Don Ryan asked him what post he would want in a Jerry Brown administration; Stewart replied without hesitation, "Secretary of Defense." Jonathan E. asked him what his defense policy would be, and Kathleen O'Neill replied for him: "Give everybody a Swiss Army knife." Stewart's response, "That would be the entire defense budget."

More startling news next time! Watch and see! —Howard Rheingold



An overdressed Kelly Teevan makes a caulk-up of the Whole Earth kitchen.

with other advisors, we developed a vision of our future based on much wider circulation of WER. Such a future would both promote our mission and improve the quality of life for WER staff. From such a sound financial base, Whole Earth could then take on other, more visionary challenges.

All that adds up to a lot of change for Whole Earth. It implies a change of culture in a fiercely cultural place. The successful introduction of management and business attitudes may, in the end, be an intractable challenge for Whole Earth: the change may be too drastic

or not in fact wanted. And with little cash and hard economic times, attempting it is even more stressful. But setting off to do it, and accomplishing what we did in 1991, arguably saved the Whole Earth ship from terminal financial shoals.

I AM leaving Whole Earth. I regret I will not be able to finish the job I was asked to do. I did not have the support necessary to carry out my job; in my view, the task of making the organization functional, sustainable, and prosperous was viewed as insufficiently interesting. As my friend John Drury likes to say,

"It sounds too much like hard work."

Whole Earth is abruptly setting a new direction. The future may be bleak or wildly rewarding. Such abrupt changes are rough on people, and they claim casualties: I am one. But I believe in Whole Earth; working here has been a lesson in the power of a mission. The Whole Earth staff has an uncommonly strong sense of mission, which has seen it through tough transitions before, and which will serve it well now. Whole Earth will (I hope) learn from some recent mistakes. An evolutionary place should.

The change in tone I helped to create here may or may not stick. It was stopped in mid-course. Keeping new attitudes and skills depends on keeping the people with those attitudes and skills. And despite a compelling mission, people can shake loose. But whatever happens here, dear Reader, it wouldn't happen and it wouldn't matter without you being out there. Perhaps now, more than ever, Whole Earth needs and deserves your support. It has mine.

—Kelly Teevan, Executive Director

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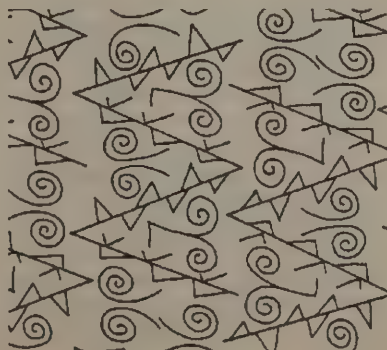
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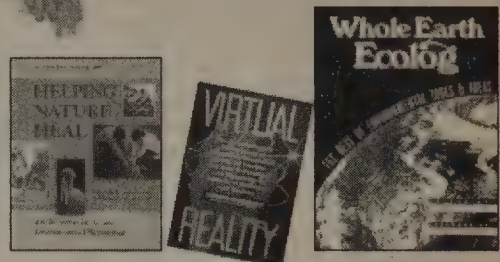
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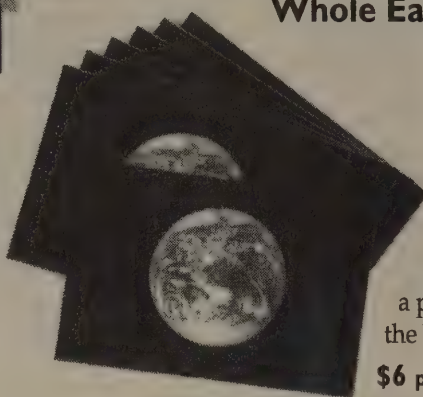


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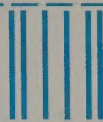


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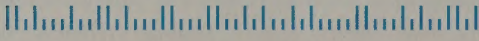
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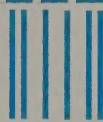


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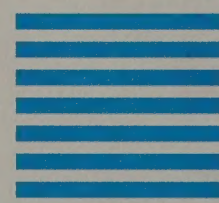


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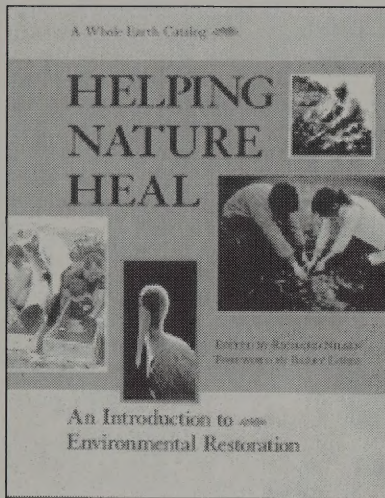
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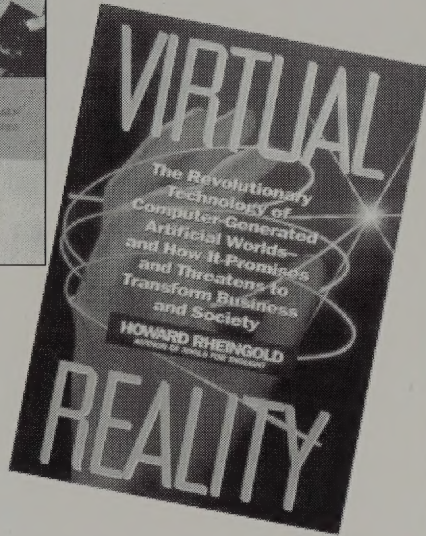
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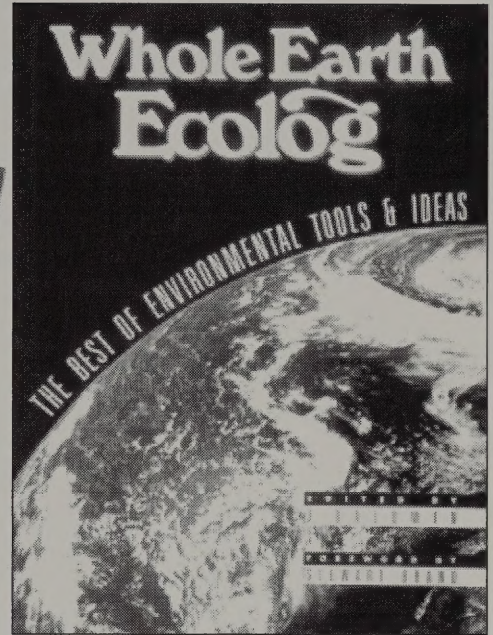
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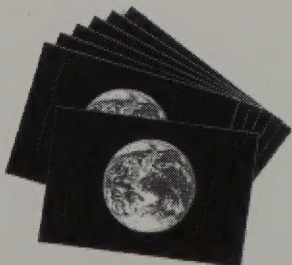
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